





THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

NOTICE FOR FIRST EDITION.

To Theatrical Managers and Artists:

A new 5 Act Comedy, by the Author of the

“BANKER’S WIFE.”

The Publishers of “OUR FIRST FAMILIES” announce that the principal characters and incidents of this Novel have been constructed into a Five Act Comedy, of which the copy-right has been secured, and they are authorized to receive offers either for the absolute purchase of the copy right, or for the privilege of its nightly representation.

Communications addressed to them, either by mail or otherwise, will be promptly answered.

WHILT & YOST, PUBLISHERS,
309 Market St., Philadelphia.

June 10th, 1855.

OUR

“FIRST FAMILIES,”

A Nobel

OF

PHILADELPHIA GOOD SOCIETY.

BY A DESCENDANT OF THE “PENS.”

“Caress the rich; avoid the unfortunate; and trust no one.”

TURKISH PROVERB.

Philadelphia:

WHILT & YOST, 309 MARKET STREET.

1855.

ENTERED according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by WHILT & YOST, in the
Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

P5
991
A1892

Special Notice.

ALTHOUGH the main incidents and principal characters of this work are sketched from the life school, yet no particular person or private history is made use of in such a manner as to warrant the direct personal application of any portion of it. Almost the only entirely bad pictures extant, as works of art, are those whose sole claim to attention is a collection of individual portraits. This is also eminently true of literature; but pen and ink are such subtle limners, that they cannot forcibly depict truth of character or manner, without flattering hundreds of the unstamped coins of current humanity that *they* must have been the model whence the portrait was drawn. But they may remain calm: their fears, their vanity and their indignation, are alike groundless, idle and unimportant.

Dedication.

To thee, 'neath whose despair-sustaining eyes
This task, 'midst anguished days and nights, was wrought,
I bring, in all their rude and homely guise,
These phantom pilgrims of my wayward thought.
If in their speech or lineament dwells aught
That may remember me to after time,
Thine is the spell that all the magic taught—
Who in those hours that suffering made sublime,
Upheld my fainting steps, life's icy steep to climb.

When friends grew cold, and kindred turned aside,
And e'en the mother spurned her first-born's name,
Thou didst not falter from my faltering side,
Though poisonous tongues grew busy with *thy* fame,
And sought thy spotless truth to brand with shame;
But leddest me, with strong and gentle hand,
Through unseen paths, that opened as we came,
Till, angel-guided, on the height I stand,
And view once more, with hope, the peaceful promised land.

Now fades the dream on fancy's mirror glassed,
Whose fleeting forms I have essayed to stay
Within these pages, as they swiftly passed—

Dimly, as waves reflect the starry way,
That arches o'er them in eternal play
Of living light—nor have I striven in vain,
If I sometimes have caught a broken ray,
Some struggling heart to cheer amidst its pain,
And show that love can star the darkest night again.

JUNE, 1855.

Contents.

CHAPTER I.

The Honourable Mrs. Valentine's Wednesday,.....	13
---	----

CHAPTER II.

The Introductions,.....	24
-------------------------	----

CHAPTER III.

Preparing for the Grand Event,.....	31
-------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV

The Head of the Family,.....	38
------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

The game of the Honest Quaker,.....	52
-------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER VI.

The gay Quaker and her Music Master,.....	70
---	----

CHAPTER VII.

The First Rehearsal,.....	82
---------------------------	----

CHAPTER VIII.

The Two Actresses,.....	93
-------------------------	----

CHAPTER IX.

The Fast Man,.....	100
--------------------	-----

CHAPTER X.

The Harems of Civilization,.....	119
----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XI.

Temptation and Trial,.....	137
----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XII.

Rosalie,.....	148
---------------	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

The Matinée Musical,.....	160
---------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

A Night of Blood,.....	170
------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XV.

The Glass Door,.....	180
----------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

The Bloody Footsteps,.....	187
----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVII.

The Devil in White Satin,.....	193
--------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Two Sisters,.....	211
-----------------------	-----

CHAPTER XIX.

Black Mail,.....	220
------------------	-----

CHAPTER XX.

Collecting Evidence,.....	228
---------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXI.

The Flowering of a Heart,.....	237
--------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXII.

Our Two Young Ladies,.....	250
----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXIII.

Restitution,.....	263
-------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Trial,.....	276
-----------------	-----

CHAPTER XXV.

Riches and Death,.....	292
------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Unlucky Interruption,.....	302
--------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Castle in the Moon,.....	311
------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Cross,.....	326
-----------------	-----

CHAPTER XXIX.

Two of the "First Families,".....	334
-----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXX.

Felice's Letter,.....	344
-----------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXXI.

An Infallible Cure for Sea Sickness,.....	350
---	-----

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Philosophy of Aristocracy,.....	361
-------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Gathering up the Threads,.....	369
--------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Women, Cats and Puppies,.....	377
-------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXXV.

Genova La Superba,.....	384
-------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Husband and Happiness,.....	395
-----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Fruition,.....	403
----------------	-----

OUR FIRST FAMILIES,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE HONOURABLE MRS. VALENTINE'S WEDNESDAY.

"BUT, my dear Mrs. Loftus, I thought you had no titles in this country; and yet my first visit is to be paid to 'the Honourable' Mrs. Valentine. Pray explain this to me."

"Oh, it is as you say," replied Mrs. Loftus; "we have no titles here—or rather, titles are valueless; and being worth nothing, are assumed by any who choose. We have whole armies of captains, colonels, and generals, without commissions; judges without benches; and honourables without either honour or profit. These empty titles are the toys and playthings with which our 'infant republic' amuses itself, and diverts the pains of growing. They are quite harmless, and they make a pleasing sound—what more would you have?"

"Oh, I am quite content, my dear madame; and so the Honourable Mrs. Valentine is no honourable after all! It is funny! What satisfaction can she have in wearing a title that does not belong to her? I would as soon appear in a borrowed dress!"

"Well, if it was a brilliant one, and you had no other qualifications for making a sensation."

"But I don't want to make a sensation," said Madame de Saintlieu simply.

"Ah! That is the grand point of difference between you and the Honourable Mrs. Valentine! She *does* want to make a sensation—it is that alone she lives for."

"And you say she is very popular?"

"Oh yes! She is, or at least assumes to be, one of the leaders of our topmost exclusive circles—the very first of our 'first families'—the authority, without whose stamp of approbation, nothing passes current in the fashionable world. And, besides her wealth, the 'Honourable' is her only claim to distinction."

"It is incredible!" exclaimed Mrs. Loftus' companion, shrugging a pair of very handsome shoulders, from which a Cashmere had fallen, in the animation of the dialogue. She was evidently a European—probably a French woman, or at all events, a resident of Paris—for nowhere else does a woman learn to draw a shawl around her in that indescribable, fascinating way, as she was now unconsciously doing. She seemed a living flower, chilled by some unexpected breath of wind, that hastened to re-envelop itself in its too soon discarded outside leaves.

“And you, my dear friend,” she resumed after a pause, “you, who are so immeasurably above all this ridiculous child’s play, how can you bear to tolerate it, and even take part in it?”

“What would you have me do?” replied Mrs. Loftus, while a slight shade passed across her fine brow—leaving it, however, momentarily as it was, open, free, and expanded with truth and benevolence. “I find this woman courted and run after by *every body*. Those who are not admitted to her society, are dying of envy and despair, while the more fortunate consider an introduction to her circles as the infallible signal of success and distinction. I must either acquiesce with the popular judgment, or I must stay entirely out of society, and thus deprive myself of the opportunity for doing good to deserving people,—such, my dear friend, as you are. What, do you think, would become of our plans, *ma petite*, if we should begin by insulting the head and front of the very class we must propitiate?”

Mrs. Loftus rarely indulged in the use of such terms of endearment. It was only when exercising the holy rights of benevolence, that her proud and erect nature condescended to stoop. It is the first impulse of true benevolence, to avoid wounding the self-love of its object.

“Forgive me, forgive me, my kind, good friend,” exclaimed Madame de Saintlieu, taking her companion’s hand and pressing it with effusion. “What am I, that I should hesitate to go where you go? I am,

indeed, ashamed, and will do every thing you wish. But—but—I am not quite sure I can get through with it at all respectably;” and she drew her shawl closer about her, with a slight shiver, full of indescribable and infantile grace.

“Do it in that way,” said Mrs. Loftus, with her calm smile, “and she will think you are only chilly with this spring wind. She is not much troubled with sensitiveness. But here we are. Prepare yourself!”

The carriage drew up, and the two ladies mounted the steps of a giddy porch attached to a very large, but very extraordinary-looking house, which might have been the brick and mortar night-mare of some dyspeptic builder, trying to digest a supper of his own materials. It looked like a collection of architectural specimens, collected in fragments from every age and every country of the earth. Its innumerable turrets, recesses, protuberances, and angles, gave you the idea of a house turned inside out, with its partitions and closets to the street.

As soon as the bell rang, a door in the stair-way beneath opened, and a roughish-looking personage came out on the sidewalk to reconnoitre. Upon seeing Mrs. Loftus, however, he gave a knowing nod, as much as to say “all right,” and disappeared.

“What does that mean?” asked Madame de Saint-lieu, with amazement.

“Oh, that means that John, the heavy man of all work, saw that we had come in a hired carriage, and supposed we must belong to the common people. Had

he not known me, and known that I have a carriage of my own, we should have been let in through the lower door. This door only opens to the quality!"

"Good heavens! I hope you are not quizzing me, Mrs. Loftus—and yet!"—and the pretty blue eyes appealed to heaven, and the pretty shoulders were shrugged, with an air that said so much, that Mrs. Loftus laughed compassionately.

"Poor thing!" said she; "what business had you in this barbarous land?"

The door was now unlocked from the inside, and grandiloquently swung open, by a most superbly got up steward, whose locks were carefully oiled and arranged in little parterres of curls, ascending mathematically to the tops—"small by degrees, and beautifully less."

Madame de Saintlieu recoiled shrinking behind her companion, whispering, "Must I really go in?"

"Hush, child—nonsense! of course! come along!" and she half led her companion through the hall, and into the back drawing-room.

They were early. There was no one in the drawing-room but Mrs. Valentine herself, and a gentleman who was seated at a grand piano, passing his fingers over the keys with that soft, feathery motion, known only to artists, who make the wires reply as if they had been brushed by a bird's wing—suggesting, with a few flashing undulations, music's infinite world.

His face flushed deeply, as Mrs. Loftus and her friend came in—like a child's caught in mischief; and

he was rising hastily to go away, when Mrs. Valentine pushed him down on the music-stool again.

"Law," she said, in a coarse voice, masculine in all but depth; "play on—it's only some of my people. This is Wednesday, you know."

The young man looked up timidly, made an awkward and ineffectual movement to rise, and then glanced helplessly round at his hat and gloves, which he had left on the long promontory of the piano, that jutted out into the dangerous sea of Wilton carpet and little tables covered with all sorts of knick-knacks, which spread between him and the door. He gave it up.

Mrs. Valentine, who had gone to meet her visitors, now came with them up to the piano, saying:

"You ungrateful fellow! You will be so glad that I didn't let you go! Here's Mrs. Loftus been kind enough to bring Madame de Saintlien to see me, about whom we have just been talking. Madame de Saintlieu, Mr. Wilmar—our American pianist, Madame de Saintlieu—indeed, I may almost call him our Philadelphia pianist—pet him so here. You will of course become the very best of friends directly. You may trust yourself safely with him, madame—he is a real artist—quite a young Chopin, I assure you."

Poor Wilmar, completely overwhelmed by this accumulation of compliments, and burning with the bashfulness which genius and sensibility supply as the *antennæ* of those poor butterflies upon whom the sun of society has never shone, was almost suffocating. He

half rose, and by an ill-considered attempt at a bow, he pushed over the music-stool; and thinking hastily to resume his seat, he suddenly found himself upon the floor, looking up in such piteous fashion, that Mrs. Valentine burst into a laugh, and even Mrs. Loftus herself could with difficulty retain her usual look of dignified gravity.

But now, the superiority of the sensitive, thoroughbred, electric woman of the world, appeared. Madame de Saintlieu instantly ran up to the poor musician, tenderly assisted him in rising, picked up the stool, and in her turn pushing him down upon it, gently, said,

“You really must pardon us for breaking in upon you so abruptly—it was not my fault, (with a wicked shaking of the finger at Mrs. Loftus.) I would have gladly stopped in the hall till that delicious nocturne of Madame Pleyel’s was over. It is a trifling thing—merely an outline of music—but how suggestive! Do favour me with it! It recalls many agreeable things to me.”

The eyes of the young man and the young woman met, while she was speaking to him in this unusual, earnest, astounding way—to him an utter stranger. But he knew why she was talking so—it was to make him forget his awkwardness and his accident—and a ray of gratitude, of divine love and worship passed into his soul, lighting up the dim, half-revealed, but glorious world that slumbered there. It was the first time in all his life that he had been entirely understood, that a thought-barbed human glance had pene-

trated to the very depths of his nature. He dared again to raise his eyes—that calm, truthful glance still beamed steadily upon him, sending strength, life and vitality through all his being. The ice was thawed—the winter fell from his soul—he was another being.

All this was quicker than thought—quicker than the flash of lightning at midnight, that discloses the whole world ere the eye can close its windows from the dizzy glare. Wilmar's embarrassment was gone. He did not speak: but with a faint smile of gratitude, he rose, brought a seat for Madame de Saintlieu, and placed it at his left hand, so that she could see his play—for artists and critics hear music with their eyes as well as their ears—and resumed the fugitive nocturne of Madame Pleyel, so light, so evanescent—sparkling and breaking like moonlit sea-foam, or the delirious *mousseaux* of champagne, dying in gladness between woman's lips.

The piece was finished, but Wilmar did not stop. His keen black eyes dilated and flashing like a snake's, (which is the most beautiful and innocent-looking eye in the world, contrary to the general prejudice—'tis the *tongue* of the reptile that darts the mischief!)—his long, wierd fingers grasping and letting go the keys with a passion that made his thin lips writhe and his cheeks palpitate in sympathy—he went on. It was his soul's song of jubilee. Never had he played in such a manner—never before had he seemed to give way to himself, and to wreak such inexhaustible expression upon the keys. Mrs. Valentine was loud and

sincere in her praises—for, with all her coarseness and vulgar tastes, she had a genuine appreciation for at least the externals of art; and even the cold Mrs. Loftus was warmed into something quite like enthusiasm. Madame de Saintlieu did not speak or move—but a sigh of pleasure expanded her bosom, and a tear, which her resistless will forbade to fall, made her eyes radiant as stars. Wilmar, who had not once removed his glance, where, fascinated, it had fixed, now exhausted by the emotions he had expressed, suddenly ceased, and let his head fall on the edge of the piano, while he convulsively pressed his handkerchief to his lips. When he looked up again, he was calm—but the handkerchief, which he held in his hand, was deeply stained with blood.

Madame de Saintlieu grew pale, and the other ladies hastened to inquire if he was ill. Mrs. Valentine was going to ring the bell.

“Do not, madam, I beg,” said Wilmar. “It is nothing. It was often so, when I was a child—whenever any thing unusually affected me. It has not come back for years—it is nothing. It is over now.”

“Well, my dear child,” said Mrs. Valentine, in her kindest voice; “you may go now. I am glad it is nothing serious: I declare I was quite frightened. But remember not to make any engagement for next Wednesday. You belong to us for that day. Madame de Saintlieu has kindly authorized her friend Mrs. Loftus, to promise for her. We will have a regular concert—Madame de Saintlieu, and yourself, and some subor-

dinates that I will pick up. You consent, do you not? And you, madame—do you think our *jeune sauvage* here will be able to accompany you?”

“It is quite unworthy of so true an artist,” replied Madame de Saintlieu, in a sincere tone, “to accompany the voice. But I will consent thus momentarily to degrade his fine genius, if he will promise to do himself full justice afterwards, by repeating the piece he has just played. It is truly an inspiration.”

It was seldom that Madame de Saintlieu, who was a perfectly conscientious critic of art, permitted herself to say so much. Wilmar seemed to feel this.

“Madame,” said he, “I will try. But I am no longer the same man I was an hour ago—I can promise nothing, until I have had time to become acquainted with my new powers. But I will try. I hope you will allow me to rehearse your music with you, until I can do it something like justice?”

“Oh, to be sure,” said Mrs. Loftus, while Wilmar blushed at his own success in finding so ready an excuse for again meeting this creature. “She is staying at my house—I have very few visitors, and you can have the drawing-room and the piano entirely to yourselves. I am determined that not one of our prying curious people shall hear a note of Madame’s voice until she makes her grand entrance here, and lays the foundation of a successful public career. There is so much humbug without talent, now-a-days, that we must see that our precious talent here is not buried, for want of proper management.”

Wilmar bowed to the two ladies, and then, turning to Madame de Saintlieu, begged to be informed when he should wait on her for rehearsal.

“Oh, to-morrow, if you like. I haven’t thought of what I am to sing—but we will try over every thing, to-morrow, and see what will do. I shall be at home all day.”

Wilmar bowed to the two ladies, and took his leave.

CHAPTER II.

INTRODUCTIONS.

THE rooms now began to fill with the usual attendants upon the Honourable Mrs. Valentine's Wednesdays. Mrs. Loftus seated herself a little apart, appearing to be occupied with her own thoughts, or in making observations upon the visitors; while Madame de Saintlieu remained standing at the piano, turning over a pile of new music.

"Why, Ellen," said Mrs. Valentine, to a thin, scraggy, die-away looking woman, bedizened in regular Rag Fair style, who floated, wriggled and simpered her way into the room, and made her way up to the patroness, with an air of the most intense toadyism. "Why, Ellen, where have you been all this time? I waited for you to arrange the sofas and tables in the front drawing-room,—and now every thing is wrong."

"Dear creature," said Mrs. Glacée, with an ineffable smile, such as lithographers bestow on their copies of Murillo's Virgin of the Crescent, "you know I am always so proud of being able to relieve you of the *petite soins* of your charming *jours de la reception*"—

“*Jours de* reception, Ellen,” said Mrs. Valentine, who justly prided herself, on the French, which was the only thing she had been able to attain at Paris; “for heaven’s sake don’t let us show our ignorance before Madame de Saintlieu, whom I am going to present to you.”

She led the now humble and obedient Mrs. Glacée up to the piano, and introduced her to Mrs. Loftus’ *protége*.

“Oh, I am so glad to meet you,” exclaimed the volatile and enthusiastic Mrs. Glacée, springing upon her toes, and clapping her hands like a little girl; “I have heard so much of you! I am quite a *devorante* of music: we are all quite *en amateur* in our circle. You should hear Mr. Attarby play the flute! I declare I am so *entraînée* by it, that poor Mr. Glacée gets sometimes quite jealous. Only think! to be jealous of a harmless instrument like a flute! You would consider that quite *mauvais gout* in Paris, wouldn’t you now?”

Madame de Saintlieu looked up wonderingly at her bizarre acquaintance, then stole a glance at Mrs. Loftus, and smiled.

“Oh, perhaps you do not speak English! Well, then, let us converse in French—it is *tout le même chose* for me. Mr. Attarby says I speak French with the true Parisian accent. But Mrs. Attarby—have you seen her? A terrible woman—snubs every body—does whatever she pleases, and is any thing but *convenable*. They do say,” continued Mrs. Glacée, sink-

ing her voice to that ominous *scan. magnitude* at which a character falls at every syllable, "they do say, that when she is in the country, she goes shooting with her husband's gun and boots, and—a-hem! you know what I-mean-ables—rides on the box with her coachman—drinks porter at luncheon, and bounces in at the drawing-room window, instead of coming through the door. Oh, a terrible woman, Mrs. Attarby, I assure you. Have you not seen her?"

"Ellen," interrupted Mrs. Valentine, "come away. You are monopolizing Madame de Saintlieu, who, I dare say, doesn't take the least interest in your *chronique scandaleuse*. Besides, I want to introduce Mrs. Wallingford, who, I see, by the sparkling of her eyes, is quite *génée* with your so long keeping possession of our new friend. Here, Lilly," she continued, turning to a slight, black-eyed, *spirituelle*-looking woman, who would have been beautiful, but that her brown complexion was spotted with freckles, and who, in spite of this blemish, was still very striking, with her masses of black shining hair, her brilliant eyes, and her white gleaming teeth, and a laughing child-like voice.

"Oh, pray, Mrs. Valentine," said the spoilt beauty, "don't disturb my dear friend, Mrs. Glacée. She isn't half through yet, for I can see that she hasn't come to me. I must wait my turn patiently, I suppose," and she gave a little toss of her head, half disdain and half disappointment. She really was a good creature at heart, and only slightly tinctured with envy. But her head was very wild and giddy, and she was

continually mistaking the whims of a morbid fancy, for the development of some profound and irresistible sentiment. She had experienced at least ten *grand passions* already in her life, without, perhaps, ever having been really in love at all; and she was the perpetual victim of the gravest scandal, without ever having committed any thing but thoughtless and innocent follies. She was gay, luxury-loving, and independent; and the daily snubbings, and terrible scandals, to which she was made a victim by the self-righteous, had sometimes made her imprudent, and even reckless. However, although she had been incessantly talked about in secret, she had still maintained her position. Her husband, a military man, was frequently absent, but he truly loved his wife, and was known to have the most unbounded confidence in her, as well as being a crack shot with a pistol.

But the indefatigable Mrs. Glacée had at last fairly talked herself out, especially as she had received none of that stimulating encouragement from her listener, which acts as a spur to your professional talker. Madame de Saintlieu indeed listened, with strict politeness; but she did no more—not even by a lifting of the eyebrows, indicating that she took any further interest in what she heard, than that which was self-imposed by that deference which is the foundation of good breeding.

Seeing that her tiresome companion, with whose ridiculous airs and affectations she was thoroughly wearied, had at length stopped the stream of her insane

twaddle, Madame de Saintlieu quietly released herself, and went towards Mrs. Valentine, who immediately presented Mrs. Captain Wallingford, and two or three other ladies, who had just arrived.

Madame de Saintlieu, whether owing to the patronage of two such powerful friends as Mrs. Loftus and Mrs. Valentine, or to the favourable impression she had made,—or probably to both—found herself a universal favourite. She was not strikingly beautiful, and there was nothing in her appearance to alarm the envy or pride of other women, who only judged of character by outside appearance. Indeed, there was something so unpretending, so absolutely quiet and unconscious in Madame de Saintlieu's manner, that she stole imperceptibly upon you, like a summer twilight, until at last you are startled into looking up, and find that night with all her starry glories is smiling mysteriously upon you.

It was agreed *nem. con.*, that Madame de Saintlieu's first appearance should take place at Mrs. Valentine's on the next Wednesday, and that the occasion should be as exclusive and distinguished as possible; especially, as the Hendersons—another acknowledged "first family," into whose circles, Mrs. Valentine and her set could no more penetrate, than Apollyon into heaven—were to give one of their grand double-distilled, exclusive dinners, on the same day. It would, of course, be a splendid triumph, to have a successful "sensation," without their help, and in direct opposition to them. Mrs. Loftus suggested, in the interest

of her *protégé*, Madame de Saintlieu, that this arrangement might perhaps keep some persons away, who would otherwise gladly attend; for though the heads of the Valentine and Henderson factions were at as bitter odds as Montague and Capulet, yet their partisans, mollified by the modern necessities of calico and cotton, exchange and speculation, occasionally commingled in society. Mrs. Loftus' suggestions, however, were disregarded. Mrs. Valentine, who had recently suffered two or three bitter mortifications at the hands of her rival, which galled her the more, as she found it totally impossible to resent them, would hear of no postponement. The idea of being the first to introduce a private morning concert, embellished by the appearance of a foreigner of undoubted family and position in Europe, such as was Madame de Saintlieu, had taken complete possession of her. She offered to take all the unsold tickets, and told her friend, Mrs. Glacée, that she must be sure and come the next day, to assist her in making the necessary preparations for having the affair come off with all possible magnificence and *éclat*.

Madame de Saintlieu, having expressed her warmest thanks for the interest taken in her, and received the most pressing invitations on all sides, took leave of her new friends, while a smile of hope lit up her face, with something more brilliant, more attractive than beauty—with the electric light of feeling.

“Oh, my dear friend,” she exclaimed to Mrs. Loftus, as they drove homeward, “how shall I ever thank

you for your delicate kindness? I shall, then, really be able, by my own exertions, to take the place of fortune to my dear little children, and to keep them near me! Thanks, thanks! You know not how deeply I feel it all here!" and taking her friend's hand, she kissed it and placed it upon her heart.

"Reserve your gratitude, my dear madame," replied Mrs. Loftus, with her placid smile, "you do not yet know our fashionable society. You will find, I fear, that they are as mean and paltry in fact, as they are ostentatious in profession. However, the affair is favourably started, and I think that the vanity of your lady patroness will induce them to make it at least moderately successful. But you cannot conceive how tenaciously our grandiloquent parvenu aristocracy cling to their dollars. By the way, what did you really think of Mr. Wilmar's playing? I am a poor judge of music, you know."

"I think him a man of genius, unquestionably, but he will fritter himself away with nervousness. He has no manner—no repose."

"Alas!—with a sick mother and two young sisters to support, he has little time to acquire repose, or even necessary practice."

"It is a great pity," replied Madame de Saintlieu, as if half speaking to herself, and half replying to her friend's remark, "he has certainly genius—poor fellow! I wish I could help him!"

CHAPTER III.

PREPARING FOR THE GRAND EVENT.

The next day betimes, the docile and devoted Mrs Glacée repaired to Mrs. Valentine's, to commence active preparations for the great event. Early as she was, however, she found a formidable areopagus already assembled. There was Mrs. Balderskin, a handsome and audacious woman, who stood up for woman's rights, and stoutly contended that ladies in private life, had as good a right to display their charms to the public, and to enjoy a free and easy life, as actresses, and other less reputable women. She boldly illustrated her theory by practice and example; and Mrs. Balderskin's bare and handsome shoulders, *decolletée* to the extremest boundary permitted even by the fashion of that time, or to be seen, any where out of a painter's studio, or a nursery, were conspicuously to be seen at the theatre, opera, concert, soiree, and conversation. Other women, like Mrs. Glacée, who had no shoulders, and consequently maintained a stout and effective defence of their virtue, as General Jackson did *not* defend New Orleans—behind cotton breast-

works—whispered, and pretty loudly, too, that Mrs. Balderskin's conduct was by no means so immaculate as her shoulders.—Little, however, did she care for that. The most powerful temptation to a handsome woman, is the envy and scandal which her successes provoke. Mrs. Balderskin was rich, young, healthy, and her husband was as contented as she was, to follow his own caprices, and leave her to the enjoyment of hers. She had but one passion—the desire of being conspicuous; and to gratify this, she was determined to pay any price. Exactly such a woman as she was, thrown upon the world without money or position, would inevitably have become what we need not characterize. As it was, she was one of those dangerous and demoralizing characters, of which our *unsifted* society contains far too many specimens, and whose *respectability* is a living libel on the institutions and principles of that society, which recognises and protects them.

Seated by the side of Mrs. Balderskin, was a fair, fat and forty old maid, who still fancied herself a young one, and was perpetually in a fever of trepidation as to the effect she was producing. For days before her appearance on any grand occasion, she was in the habit of scouring the city, (for she knew everybody,) and going from house to house, among her acquaintances, soliciting their opinion as to whether she looked best in red or green, and what effect she would be likely to produce in this head-dress, or that cape.—When actually in society, she seemed to be sitting on nettles, and was perpetually getting up, walking about,

sitting down, and then walking about again, and trying to read, in the countenances of others, what kind of a success she was then and there achieving. But alas! Miss Jemimah Jenkins was the only person whose thoughts or ideas were in the least occupied with the appearance or movements of Miss Jemimah Jenkins. She had years since been unanimously voted an intolerable bore; and though she was wealthy, of the most extra-virtuous behaviour, and really quite good-looking, every body dreaded to encounter her. The worst of it all was, that her self-complacence was so intense, that she sincerely believed in her own importance, and mistook the frequent symptoms of impatience which her presence excited, for envy of her superior charms and fascinations. To her mind, woman had but one mission, which was to excite the admiration of men—but one duty, which was to disappoint the hopes which that admiration inspired. In this double self-imposed struggle, poor Miss Jenkins had a hard time of it—yet it must be confessed, that the continual contests with the monster man, to which she submitted, with the smiling confidence and courage of a martyr, seemed to agree marvellously well with her. She was still round and ruddy—ate and slept remarkably well—and, but that she would insist upon surmounting her brown wig with preposterous garlands of japonicas and orange flowers, and insisted upon having her frocks made with waists *à la vierge*, like those of babies, she might have passed through this

great lunatic asylum, which we call the world, without being considered one of its most incorrigible inmates.

"Well, now, my dear Mrs. Valentine," said Miss Jenkins, after she had carefully taken off her shawl before the looking-glass, put up her foot on the edge of a chair, to examine the effect of her ankle in a new flesh-coloured silk stocking, settled her wig, and given an infantile twist to the left shoulder of her dress; "now then, tell us all about this wonderful morning concert. You have been in Paris and London, and know all the ins and outs of the affair. When is it to begin? Not before ten o'clock, I hope—I am so sleepy of mornings, that I really sometimes think I can't be done growing yet. He! he!"

"Madame de Saintlieu and myself have already agreed about the time," replied Mrs. Valentine, with an assumed gravity and importance. "The concert is to begin at three o'clock."

"Three o'clock! why, that's an afternoon concert."

"So it is, Mrs. Balderskin," broke in Miss Jenkins; "and how is a body to know how to dress, at such an extraordinary time of day? In evening or dinner dress, I suppose, of course. By the way, Mrs. Glacée, do you think I look best by daylight in my blue and gold, or my crimson-flowered brocade?"

"No one wears any thing but a morning dress at a morning concert, Miss Jenkins," said Mrs. Glacée; "the very name expresses the idea."

"But *I* shall, though, my dear Mrs. Glacée. I can't bear to sit in a crowded drawing-room, or theatre with

my neck and shoulders muffed up like a sea-captain's. Let every one dress according to her own taste or necessities. I shall go in full dress."

"Well, well, never mind, now," said Mrs. Valentine, who saw an angry cloud rising to the brow of her *ombra*, Mrs. Glacée, whose shoulders, no more than her neighbour's reputation, would not bear a too free exposure. "Fine enough, for all that. The present question is, about the invitations. Ellen, you make out a list, as far as you can recollect, and I will draw up the form of invitation."

Mrs. Glacée went to work at her list, and Mrs. Valentine at her form of invitation. After a severe labour, and a general consultation with the others, the following formula was produced:

"Mrs. Valentine will be happy to receive Mr. and Mrs. —, on Wednesday, for the purpose of attending a morning concert, to be given by Madame de Saintlieu, at her house.

"To commence at 3 o'clock.

"Tickets \$3."

"Oh, that's a great deal too much!" exclaimed Miss Jenkins; "why, you can hear Jenny Lind for that,—and Madame de Saintlieu has no name as an artist."

"Well, I think myself it's too much," said Mrs. Balderskin, touching her lips with a seventy-five dollar pocket-handkerchief. "No doubt this Madame de Saintlieu is all very well in her way—but then, no matter what she may have been, remember she is now only an artist. However, it is certainly worth some-

thing to be exclusive, and not be pushed and elbowed about by the vulgar rabble. Let us put the price at two dollars."

"Agreed," said Mrs. Valentine, who was well acquainted with the shop-keeping habits of her countrymen, and whose standard had been fixed by Madame Saintlieu, at two dollars. The deduction in prices was therefore made; and every body pleased at the immense economy thus effected.

The next question was, how the invitations should be prepared—whether written or printed, whether in the form of notes or cards. One thought an engraved card would be the most stylish,—another suggested written notes, enclosing a programme of the music, printed on pink satin. Finally, the written note was decided on, as being most aristocratic, but the programme was voted decidedly vulgar, and was therefore dispensed with.

Mrs. Glacée was then set to writing the notes, as fast as she could. Miss Jemimah, who was tremendously good-natured, as we have said, and had a most violent penchant for making herself useful, offered to assist; and as she wrote very prettily,—though sometimes hesitating a good while to ascertain which way the curl of a g's tail would look best, whether turned to the right or left, she made but slow progress.

The other ladies, seeing things so fairly under way, now went away, to prosecute their shopping and other avocations. Mrs. Balderskin, looking at her watch, vowed that she did not know it was so late, and hur-

ried off in evident trepidation, lest she should be too late for some appointment. Any one who had seen the shrugs and smiles, exchanged between Mrs. Valentine and Mrs. Glacée, as she went out, would have been at no loss to guess its probable character.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY.

LET us get in the omnibus, reader. The "store" is a long way off, and we can have a good ride for our fip. And, as lucky as if it were in a play, here comes Mr. Henderson himself, to bear us company. The driver has caught the commanding wave of his cane: and though Mr. Henderson's fip isn't actually worth any more than our own—sometimes, in fact, not so much, as the great merchant, in making up his cash account, puts a "short fip" into his waist-coat pocket, especially for the omnibus—still the driver feels an involuntary sentiment of respect for his wealthy customer, and pulls up close to the curb-stone, although it isn't at all muddy, and Mr. Henderson's boots are not remarkably clean. But that is nothing—every body knows him, from the Schuylkill to "the Coast." His store, one of the largest, wealthiest, and longest-established in the city, is the universal resort of the wives and daughters of the wealthy residents, who can make their purchases there, at a much lower rate than in the fashionable, show-window establishments of Chest-

nut street. Mr. Henderson is a quaker—a descendant of one of the early settlers on the banks of the Delaware—a companion and friend of William Penn, and a sharer with that great patriot and patriarch, in the gigantic profits of some of his “fair business transactions” with the Indians. The poor Indians! Surely their fate has been a hard one. Cheated or slaughtered, and maddened by bad whisky, depopulated by small pox and other civilized diseases, they have been trundled off and out of existence, with very little ceremony, to make room for Young America, and his heterogeneous family of pedlars, speculators, and hard diggers. If the benevolent old patriarch Penn was a shrewd calculator, and drove hard bargains with the natives, still his treatment looks like positive fatherly kindness, compared with the bloody extermination of the race by the settlers of other portions of the country.

However the quaker of modern days may have deteriorated in point of humanity and benevolence, from the standard of William Penn, he has at any rate lost nothing of the bargain-making and wealth-acquiring faculties which distinguished the great prototype and model of the sect. The quaker, in our days, is, on a large scale, what the degenerated sons of Israel are on a small one. The passion of *getting*, and the enjoyment of *keeping*, are the only sentiments which he permits to remain active in his bosom. All the other feelings, passions, and affections of his nature are distilled down into the tasteless, spiritless, colourless

consistence of *duties*—duties prescribed by law, and public opinion, and so far scrupulously performed; but duties which do not prevent extortion, over-reaching, oppression of the poor, fraud in trade, a life of falsehood and dishonesty, such as, were it not regulated by a sagacious knowledge of the laws and technicalities of trade—by a careful study of the art of playing upon the miseries, the indiscretions, and the passions, of mankind—and by a sleepless self-control, that never deserts or betrays him, even in his hours of love and endearment, (if he have any,)—would cover him with infamy as a cheat and swindler.

Much of this is doubtless owing to the hypocritical, hollow and false spirit of trade engendered by the fierce commercial rivalry of the times, and the universal extravagance, heartlessness and rivalries of the women of our commercial classes. But the quaker cannot plead the necessities of his family and kindred, for his griping and unscrupulous avarice—because the tenets of his creed strictly forbid extravagance, ostentation, and display of all kinds. The covetousness of the quaker is a problem which has never been solved, and yet it seems to be capable of a natural solution. It is the love of power, subjected to a rigid logical action. The quaker sees that wealth is the one great end and aim of mankind, and that this wealth either eludes the grasp of the great majority, or else is squandered as fast as acquired, through the activity of the passions—especially those of social rivalry, gambling and love. Now, if he can subdue the passions, and leave the in-

telleet alone to work, the chances of success are infinitely multiplied. By destroying a suppressing pride, the quaker can stoop to humiliations, meannesses, deceptions, and innumerable tricks and devices, from which a proud man would revolt. By extinguishing love, both conjugal and fraternal, and substituting a decent and respectable observance of the conventionalities of the household, he cuts off at once the great motive of imprudence, recklessness, and extravagance, both on the part of himself and his family, and shields himself plausibly from refusing all favours, kindnesses or obligations, for his neighbours and associates. Thus, by sweeping away, or for confining in the recesses of his own bosom, all the passions and feelings which lead to the spending of money, and developing to its keenest activity the intellect, which is the medium of getting it, the way to riches and power is open. Individuals who act upon this theory are often met in the world at large—and always among the rich. In fact, save here and there, by inheritance or accident, or some immense and successful scheme of legal humbug or rascality, scarcely any man in this country ever does become rich on any other theory.

But the quakers are the only sect who have embodied and expanded this theory into a doctrine, and organized upon it a distinctive social body. The consequence is, that the quakers are all rich—that is, every quaker is much richer than a man of the same intellectual organization and personal advantages as himself, in the profane world. Quakerism is literally

the golden creed—the religion of money—the living, vital, daily worship of Mammon, the only material deity, from Paganism to our own times, possessing the power and the will to reward his votaries.

Any man can become a quaker, either openly or by the secret practice of his life—any man can sell his *soul* and still keep his *mind*; and it is frightful to see how this horrible crime of moral mutilation is spreading and multiplying among us. As in the times of luxury, men were deprived of their manhood, that they might acquire brilliant voices, so our modern artificers of wealth, divest themselves of heart and feeling, of love and sympathy, and of the godlike happiness of doing good to others, that they may clutch and hold fast the glittering symbols of power. Detestable insanity! Self-immolating egotism! that withers every noble, tender, beautiful, and holy thing in nature, and makes the world a hell!

Mr. Henderson was born and educated a quaker, of the purest and strictest school. He was of a powerful mental organization, and the early and systematic repression of the natural sympathies, affections, and inspirations, had imparted to his grasping intellect a cold and remorseless contempt for mankind a misanthropic hatred of refinement, of women, and of every form of art and pleasure—things which, had he dared, he would so boundlessly have enjoyed! Add to this being, the most exquisite self-control of voice, manner, and feature—a hypocrisy so perfect as to appear almost sublime—and the character of Ira Henderson is before you.

Mr. Henderson had inherited a large portion of his present enormous wealth. As we have said, his ancestor was among the companions of Penn, and was one of the first to establish regular mercantile business in Philadelphia. For several generations, the name, the business, and the patrimony, had been regularly transmitted. The firm of Ira Henderson and Son, had been familiar to every succeeding generation of Philadelphians, and had now almost become one of the municipal archives. But the present owner of the name, had quadrupled at least the wealth he had inherited. A series of fortunate mercantile ventures, under his careful management, had poured thousands upon thousands into the treasury of the house; but it had received its greatest and most brilliant accession from a transaction which took place some few years before the commencement of our story, and might be called his crowning financial achievement.

Of this achievement, the exigencies of our story require that we should give a brief account. Those who, in a novel, always skip such things as explanations, and hurry on to the dialogues and the catastrophies, must content themselves either with misunderstanding and puzzling themselves in vain over the dramatic development of our narrative, or else with humbly recurring to this and the following chapter, and furnishing themselves with the requisite information.

Although the quakers trust nobody, either in friendship or business, yet they do not at all object to others trusting in *them*. On the contrary, one of their most

cherished objects, is to inspire the confidence of the community, in their strict and punctilious good faith, especially in matters of money and fiduciary trust; and so willing is that ass, society, to take every one at his own valuation, and bray in concert with him who blows his own trumpet the loudest, that thousands have been completely ruined by this fashionable and implicit trust, without ever even suspecting the dishonesty and hypocrisy that had destroyed them. but which had succeeded in diverting the attention of their victim in an entirely opposite direction.

It is to one of these transactions, in which the present Mr. Henderson had been a lordly though infamous gainer, that we must now allude.

Among the acquaintances—we should say friends, if such men ever had friends—of Mr. Henderson, was a gentleman about his own age, named Wilmar. Mr. Wilmar was a man of very great wealth, and of an elegant and highly cultivated taste. Having succeeded early in life in amassing a fortune which would have satisfied any body but a miser, and which supplied a princely income without touching the capital, he had retired from business at fifty, and devoted the remainder of his life to the enjoyment, in the bosom of his beloved family, of all the refined happiness which wealth, taste, and mutual affection could bestow,—to which was added the exquisite pleasure of a discriminating and far-reaching benevolence, dispensed under the direct superintendence of Mrs. Wilmar herself.

They had three daughters, all born within the first

ten years of their marriage, and a much younger son—a blessing long prayed and waited for, and who gave promise, even in his childish years, of every thing his doting parents and sisters had hoped. Tender, affectionate, and sensitive as a girl, he was the idol of the whole family, yet he was not spoilt. The natural goodness of the boy himself, as well as the excellent judgment and careful nurture of both his father and mother, prevented him from becoming either selfish or wilful. Wayward he certainly sometimes was—dreaming, excitable, enthusiastic, even passionate. But in none of these moods did he indicate any intrinsically evil propensities. On the contrary, in very early years he betrayed the possession of that peculiar and mysterious organization whose results are what men call genius, and which, nine times in ten, are a life-long curse to their possessor. Geniuses are generally born and remain, poor: and genius itself, from the exquisiteness of its physical as well as mental organization, demands a large enjoyment of physical pleasure, and seeks ever to surround itself with material luxury. Add to this, its inherent disdain for money, and for all the methods and processes of obtaining or keeping it—and the poverty and misery of the sons and daughters of genius will no longer excite our wonder.

But such did not threaten to be the fate of the young Arthur Wilmar. Like the princes and princesses of the Byzantine empire, he was *born in the purple*, and opened his eyes only to luxury, indulgence, and happiness. Both Mr. and Mrs. Wilmar, as well as the

sisters, eagerly watched and tended the developement of the infant son and brother. The father saw in him the worthy representative of his countless wealth and spotless name; his mother doted on him with that surpassing love known only by mothers for the youngest-born, who comes long after she has ceased to hope for so much happiness, to sustain and bless her declining years. The sisters were emulous of each other in their attentions to their young brother, and already looked forward to the time when his manly arm should be held out to guide and protect them. His future career was the daily subject of loving discussion; and his father had already endeavoured to analyze the peculiar character of his son, with a view to the most appropriate career for him to embrace.

But these fair and happy prospects were suddenly clouded; and in the tempest that followed, all these brilliant hopes were dashed to the ground. Mr. Wilmar, having taken a severe cold, in consequence of a drenching which he had got from a sudden shower, during one of his daily rides on horseback, was seized with a violent inflammation of the lungs, which in less than twenty-four hours assumed a threatening aspect. The children cowered, terror-stricken, in their rooms, listening breathlessly to every sound that went through the house, as if it were laden with some dreadful intelligence.

The wife alone was firm, and, apparently, unmoved. Except that she was very pale, and there was a nervous trembling in her hands, which were cold and clam-

my, she received the family physician, as if upon one of his ordinary visits.

"Good morning, madam," said Dr. Felton, cheerfully, as he came in. "I am sorry to hear that Mr. Wilmar is ailing. An indigestion, or a cold, I suppose. We must set him to rights, directly."

"He was in much suffering during the night, doctor: he has a very high fever, and appears to me to be very ill. I am thankful that John found you at home. Pray, come up stairs directly."

The doctor saw instantly that the case was much more serious than he had supposed. His patient was evidently very ill.

"Why, my dear friend," said he, hastening to the bed, and taking the sick man's hand; "why did you not send for me last night? How long have you been in this way?—How did it come on?"

Wilmar's lips were parched with fever, and he spoke with difficulty. Mrs. Wilmar, though trembling with anxiety, at what she read in the physician's countenance, clearly and concisely explained the circumstances, and stated that it was by her husband's express desire that she had not disturbed him in the night.

"Disturbed, my dear friend! Preposterous! I am disturbed perpetually with all sorts of trivial complaints. You should have sent for me at once."

Mrs. Wilmar uttered a faint shriek; but restraining herself by a violent exertion, she took her husband's hot hand, which the doctor had let fall, and pressed it to her bosom.

"Come, come, my good friends!" said the doctor: "I hope no serious harm has been done by the delay. We only want a little patience and good nursing—and I am sure," looking kindly at Mrs. Wilmar, "we know where to expect them—and every thing will be right. Courage, my dear lady—courage!"

But we must not dwell upon this scene. The reader has already divined the result. The inexorable messenger had knocked at the door of the rich and happy man, in full career of life, with every blessing smiling around him, and expanding on every side in long vistas of hope and happiness—while he had passed unnoticed, the weary and heart-broken, waiting impatiently for his summons, writhing in pain upon their miserable pallets, and longing to bid adieu to the world in which they had found no place.

On the third day, Dr. Felton found his patient alone. His wife, who had not slept since her husband's first attack, had gone to her daughters' room for a moment's repose, and had left the sick room to the care of the oldest daughter.

When the doctor rang the bell, Mr. Wilmar called his daughter to him.

"Emma, darling," said he, in a faint voice, taking her hand and kissing it; "go out now, for a little while. Dr. Felton and I have our ailments and medicines to discuss, which will not be at all intelligible to you. I will send for you in a few moments."

The doctor came in, trying his best to look cheerfully.

"Well," said he, rubbing his hands, with a rather over-acted smile; "how are we to-day, my dear friend? Has that obstinate fever of ours taken his departure yet?"

"Doctor," said the patient; "I am glad that you find me alone. My wife, completely worn out, has gone to lie down, and I sent Emma away when I heard you ring. Doctor, I am much worse: I do not think I shall get well. I implore you to tell me your candid opinion. It is absolutely indispensable that I should make some arrangements respecting my worldly affairs. For God's sake do not deceive me: you would perhaps be the means of inflicting incalculable misery upon them, after I am gone."

"My excellent and noble-hearted friend," replied Doctor Felton, "I am rejoiced to find you in this frame of mind: for although I don't positively apprehend any danger, yet these diseases—these violent fevers—in short, we are both sensible and courageous men, Wilmar; and there is no harm in providing for the worst. I shall treat you like the brave man I know you to be. There *is*, then, if this confounded idiopathic inflammation of the lungs is not checked—excuse my technicalities," said he, with a faint smile—"there is—there might be—in fact, considerable"—

"I understand you, dear Felton," said the patient, calmly. "You and I have known each other too long and too well to play at cross purpose. I shall not recover. But tell me, even at the worst, how long or how short a time may I expect?"

"Oh, as for that, three or four days will settle this infernal inflammation," said the doctor, gulping furiously at something in his throat: "and then," he added, briskly, "we can see, you know, what the case next requires."

"Precisely, doctor. And now answer me another question. Do you consider Ira Henderson a perfectly honest and faithful man?"

"Certainly," said the doctor, surprised. "Have you any reason for thinking otherwise?"

"By no means. On the contrary, I have every reason for confiding implicitly in him. I am glad your judgment agrees with mine."

"Yes, it must be so. If Ira Henderson is not honest, why hang it! there can be no such thing as honesty. His house has for generations been proverbial for its good faith."

"It is true,—it must be so: I believe it. Will you ride by his store, and ask him if he can come and see me, this evening, on particular business?"

"Certainly, certainly; but let us hope for a great deal better things than that! We do not begin to despond yet—not by any means. Courage! Courage! If we can once get the upper hand of that devilish inflammation—God forgive me for swearing!—we shall get on well enough. I shall see you early to-morrow, and will go round to Henderson's immediately. Good bye!"

Mrs. Wilmar, who had got up, having in vain tried to sleep, met the doctor at the top of the stairs.

“Doctor, dear doctor, is he better?” she faltered.

“Not precisely better, as yet, my dear madam.— You see these idiopathic inflammations, as I have just been explaining to Mr. Wilmar, are very violent and obstinate customers. They require patience. Meanwhile, you *must* take some rest, or I shall have you upon my hands, too. Now promise me that you will take a nice cup of tea, in your own room, this evening, and go quietly to bed and to sleep. Promise!”

“I promise.”

“That’s right, that’s right. God bless you, my dear Mrs. Wilmar!”

CHAPTER V.

THE GAME OF "HONEST QUAKER."

SINCE Mr. Wilmar had retired from business, he had intrusted the entire management of his wealth, which he had converted into stocks and available funds, to his friend Ira Henderson, in whom every one, as well as himself, had the most unbounded confidence—not merely in his good faith, for that was a question not even thought of, so much above suspicion of every kind was he—but in his good fortune. Every thing he touched prospered; and even in enterprises which were on the point of being abandoned as hopeless, if once his name appeared among their supporters, every thing was changed immediately. He was what gamblers call a lucky card—the dread of bankers, and whose bets, however at random, are eagerly followed by the other players—and it is notorious, they generally win.

Mr. Wilmar had, therefore, wisely, as he thought, placed his capital in the hands of his friend, the great quaker merchant, who was secretly concerned in one of the largest banking-houses in Third Street, and

could profitably and safely employ any number of millions, as being a better investment for his children, than an idle deposit at ordinary interest. He had also made his will, a copy of which was deposited with his lawyer, signed by himself, and duly attested, and the original confided to Mr. Henderson, who was appointed sole executor and administrator, for the equal benefit of his children. It was not without some well-feigned reluctance, that the "honest quaker" had been prevailed upon to assume so heavy a responsibility. But Wilmar pressed him so earnestly, that he could no longer refuse. So infatuated was Wilmar, or rather, so happy in the certainty of having found so safe and trustworthy an agent and executor, that he even gave him complete control of his wife's fortune as well as his own. It is true, he had attempted to consult her on this point, but she replied with a smile,

"My dear, my fortune is so much more than I deserve that as long as I have you, I have nothing else to care for. Your judgment is mine, in this as in all things."

And so the poor flies actually solicited the honour of the sleek and honest-looking spider, to be allowed to walk into his neatly-contrived cell, to be caught and devoured!

At eight o'clock, precisely, on the evening of the day in which Mr. Wilmar had sent for his friend Henderson, that worthy man rang the bell, and was shown directly to the sick man's room.

"How does thee do, friend Wilmar," inquired the

quaker in his unmodulated voice, that sounded like the noise made by a machine, and slowly rubbing his hands, which crackled like parchment.

"I am very ill, my dear friend, and have little breath to waste. I have sent for you to give you my last instructions respecting my family. I leave them entirely in your hands, as, next to my own, the most trustworthy on earth. I have made no change as to the final disposition of my property among my family. Every thing remains as expressed in my will. All is placed in your hands for investment; and after my death, separate accounts are to be opened for my wife and each of the children, so that each shall be entirely independent, and can withdraw his or her portion without restraint. As my executor, you will, of course, exert an influence over either of the children, in case it should ever become necessary. But I trust that they will not be intractable."

"Mh!" piously whined the honest quaker, through the most orthodox and nasal of noses.

"My greatest concern," continued Wilmar, "is for my son Arthur. He is now old enough to think of choosing his profession, and yet he has indicated no disposition to do so. He is so absorbed in his musical studies, that he thinks of nothing else. He told me the other day, with one of his gay laughs, that he actually believed he should turn artist."

"Mh!" repeated Mr. Henderson commiseratively, "it would not appear that the thumping upon wires with little hammers would greatly profit the lad's fortune or standing among his fellow men."

“Certainly not. Although I have a profound reverence for art and artists,—as I know, my friend, you have not,—yet it is not a profession my son must choose. He has great talent—genius, I am certain. I had fondly hoped to watch him with my own care, and see him fitted for one of the great careers of life—politics or the law. But that dream is over. The Lord’s will be done.”

“Mh!”

“I have said all, my dear friend. I had nothing really new to add to my former arrangements. All your affairs are going on prosperously, I hope?”

“Providence be thank-ed for his mercies, yes. Would thee desire, friend Wilmar, to examine the condition of my stewardship? I will forthwith prepare a full exhibit, if thee wishes.”

“No, no, my friend, by no means. I am far too weak to look at it—even this conversation has exhausted me. Besides, do I not know you, my old and well-tried friend? Have I not trusted you as a brother, and ever found you true? Safely, therefore, I commend my dear ones to your fatherly care. You appear cold, I know, and impassive—but your heart is in the right place.”

“Mh!” again repeated the quaker. Then rising, and buttoning his long Jesuit’s coat to the very edge of his starchless white neckerchief, and settling his low, broad-brimmed felt hat, which he had never removed from his head, he prepared to leave the room.

“I hope thee’ll be better soon, friend Wilmar,”

said he; "if thee needs me again, thee knows where to send for me:"—and so, without civility or courtesy of any kind, he went down the stairs, and left the house.

The presentiments of Mr. Wilmar as to his own fate, proved to be correct. In spite of the skill of Dr. Felton, who insisted upon calling into consultation several other of the most eminent of his brethren—spite of the unwearied attentions, the prayers, the agony of Mrs. Wilmar and his children, who sobbed and shrieked around him—he died calmly and quietly, on the third day after his interview with Mr. Henderson.

The grief of the wife was mortal—past all cure. A severe paralytic stroke, brought on by the violence of her emotions, left her a helpless wreck, far more pitiable than death—for she might never hope to recover life in this world. Gently and patiently was she watched by her children, who took turns—Arthur insisting upon taking his turn with his sisters—in attending to her wants, and never for a moment leaving her, night or day.

For a few months no change occurred in their position—Mr. Henderson answering, as was customary, all their orders upon him for money. At length, one morning, quite early, a ring was heard at the street door, and Mr. Henderson presented himself in the breakfast room, where Emma and her sister Helen, with Arthur, were about commencing breakfast.

"Thee doesn't know me, young woman, does thee? But the young man may remember me. I am Ira Henderson thy father's executor."

"I know you, sir," replied Arthur, coming forward respectfully, "as my father's confidential and worthy friend. My sisters and myself have often wondered that we never had the pleasure of seeing you."

"Our people never pay visits to the world's people, except on business."

"Then I am to suppose that you have business now? But pray, Mr. Henderson, at least take a seat."

"I have no time to stay. I came, young man, to tell you that the bank where your fortune, as well as a great part of my own, was invested, is broken. The stock is down to nothing—the depositors will never get a cent."

And Mr. Henderson, casting an indescribable look out of his livid eyes upon the sumptuous appointments of the apartment, left the house without another word.

It was not at once that the poor children could understand the full meaning of Mr. Henderson's communication. They had heard the words, it is true, but their total inexperience of life, of the value of money, or of the tenure of worldly possessions, prevented them from appreciating their real meaning.

Arthur and his sisters, therefore, said but little, but sat looking at each other in distress and confusion. At length Emma said,

"Helen, dear, go up to mamma's room, and send Kate down stairs. She is the only one of us that knows any thing about business. Perhaps she can tell us what it all means."

"Dear Kate," said Arthur, "Mr. Henderson has been

here, and he says that the bank is broken, and that we are ruined. What can he mean?"

"Nonsense!" said Kate, "it must have been a joke: papa was so rich!"

"He did not look at all as if he were joking," said Arthur. "What is to be done?"

"I'll tell you," said Kate, after thinking a long time. "Arthur, you must go and see Dr. Felton. He will call upon Mr. Henderson and find out all about it."

"That is the very thing; I will go this minute. But don't say a word to mother until I come back. There may be some mistake."

In about two hours, Arthur came back. He looked a different being from the Arthur of the morning. The boy had become a man. His sisters regarded him with surprise, and ran to him tenderly.

"Dear brother, what is the matter?"

"What has happened? Tell us, dear Arthur.—Tell us the worst."

"It is true, my dear sisters—true. We are entirely ruined. Every thing will be taken from us. Our poor mother!—What is to become of her?"

"Oh, we will work for her—we will never leave her!" exclaimed the girls, embracing one another.

"And me," said Arthur, "admit me also to this sacred circle. And let us take upon ourselves a solemn obligation, that, happen what will, we will never separate—never leave our poor mother!"

"Never! never!"

"But," said Helen, after a pause, blushing and smiling as she spoke, "I will write to Edward"—

"Build no hopes on your lovers, girls," said Arthur, sadly; "they will but follow the rest of the world. Dr. Felton has given me some harsh but much-needed information as to our changed position. Hereafter, we must rely on ourselves alone."

"Oh, I am sure of Edward Ingraham," exclaimed Helen, her eyes sparkling with animation, "Wealth or poverty will make no difference with him."

The bell at this moment rang, and a note for Helen was delivered by the penny post-man. Helen opened it eagerly, and read:—

"My dear Miss Wilmar—It is with the liveliest concern that I have just heard from my husband, the pecuniary misfortunes that have overtaken your family. We sincerely regret an occurrence which, among other disagreeable consequences, will prevent the nearer relationship which in other circumstances had been contemplated between our families. My son Edward unites with me in sending condolences.

"Your obedient

"MARY E. INGRAHAM."

Poor Helen! Sinking into a chair, she covered her face with her hands, and wept in silence.

"It is what I expected, my dear sister," at length said Arthur, going up to his sister, kneeling down beside her, and putting his arms round her neck. "But,

cheer up! Such promptness to cast you off, now that you are no longer rich, shows too clearly that he was unworthy your love. Henceforth, we must be all in all to one another—our own world. We have no one to depend on but ourselves. You will see, sisters," he continued, rising, and speaking in a cheerful voice, "that your brother is no longer a boy, but a man, devoted to you and our dear mother, and ready to employ every energy to sustain and support you. Dr. Felton says, that with my musical acquirements, I need not lack for profitable employment—and surely the career of an artist is an honourable and lofty one. It is, as you well know, that which I would have selected in preference to any other. And now that I have such additional stimulus to exertion, you shall see what progress I will make."

His confident tone seemed to inspire his sisters with his own spirit.

"I can certainly do something with my needle," said Emma; "I have been greatly complimented on my embroidery—and, though I may not be able to earn much, the trifle will help."

"And I," said Kate, "I will teach languages, or keep a shop, or do something. I will not be idle."

"For me," said Helen, drying her eyes, "I do not know what I can do. But I can at least help in taking care of mamma, and look after the household affairs. You know papa always praised my housekeeping."

"Dear girls," exclaimed Arthur, embracing them in turn, "with such a spirit, we cannot fail. God will

not desert us, while we thus do our duty. We shall yet be happy. But I forbid any scheme for either of you that will separate us. Let us at least remain together, and then we may defy poverty, or at any rate, meet it with courage and hope. Go to my mother, Emma—she has been left alone too long already. Do not tell her any thing—it would only distress her uselessly. I shall go to Dr. Felton, who has kindly promised to advise with me as to our plans. Good bye! and keep up a heart!”

Arthur went out, and the sisters went to their mother's room, as usual. Emma to read to her, Kate to put the room in order, while poor Ellen, her eyes still red with weeping, and her heart sobbing with its great sorrow, stole to a piano—which had been brought to Mrs. Wilmar's room, that she might listen to music, of which she was so fond—and at first unconsciously running over the keys, the young girl gradually found expression for her grief, in the pure and sublime language of art—the only friend that never deceives, the only confidant that never betrays, the only consoler that never fails—for art, to the refined nature, is the symbol of eternal truth, eternal harmony, and infinite goodness.

By the advice of Dr. Felton, Arthur went the next day to see Mr. Spearbill, who had been his father's lawyer, and was acquainted with the circumstances of the will and executorship of Mr. Henderson. At first Mr. Spearbill made a great many wise and mysterious observations, tending to assure his young client that

he might depend upon him for sifting the matter to the bottom, and that, if there had been any foul play, he should be sure to ferret it out.

"But do you suspect any thing wrong, then?" inquired Arthur.

"My dear young friend," replied Mr. Spearbill, in pompous and measured tones, "it would be going a great deal too far, in the present incipient stage of the affair, to say that we suspect any thing wrong. Mr. Ira Henderson is a respectable man—a very respectable man—the head of one of the best houses in the city—stands high, too, in society—one of the first families—a man of great influence and unimpeached character. Mind, I do not *say* there is any thing wrong—I do not even say that I *suspect* any thing wrong. Bank broke, you say—all your property confided to it—all gone—Mr. Henderson, too, a great loser! It is, to be sure, a remarkable circumstance, in so shrewd a man as Mr. Henderson. It ought to be inquired into. You may depend on me, Mr. Wilmar. I should look carefully after the interests of my late worthy and excellent friend's family. You may depend upon me, implicitly. I shall wait upon Mr. Henderson this very day."

Arthur went away; and Mr. Spearbill, taking his hat and gold-headed cane, smoothed his white waistcoat over his capacious stomach, buttoned the top button of his blue coat, so as to expose a goodly portion of his waistcoat—and took his way to the counting-house of the great merchant.

On inquiring for Mr. Henderson, he was shown into a private office, at the back of the store, where the great merchant sat alone at his cash and sales books, and by the help of the bank book, calculating the profits of the week.

"How does thee do, friend Spearbill," said the quaker, scarcely looking up. "Thee may take a seat for a few minutes, if thee will. I have a calculation here that somewhat troubles me. It is meet that I should make it right, while the transactions of the day are fresh in my memory. Exactitude, thee knows, is as necessary in business as punctuality."

"No one knows that so well as a lawyer," replied Mr. Spearbill, sententiously. "I have often known the weightiest cases, involving entire estates, to turn upon a single word."

"Mh!" slowly ejaculated Mr. Henderson, as he went on with his occupation.

In about a quarter of an hour—as soon as he thought his visiter had got thoroughly impatient and out of humour,—he laid down his bank book, and wheeled round on his patent revolving chair, until he sat face to face with his visiter.

Neither spoke for some time—each seemed to be reading the countenance and character of the other.

The lawyer was the first to break the silence.

"So," said he, "the 'monster' has succumbed at last! A terrible crash,—a terrible crash! But not unexpected. Every body has known for some time that it must come, sooner or later. You financial

men—at least shrewd and experienced ones like yourself—took good care to sell out your stock, and withdraw your deposits, before the crash took place? 'Terrible crash! terrible crash!' repeated Mr. Spearbill, as if to himself, while taking a pinch of snuff, and carefully brushing away the pungent particles that had lodged on his stainless white waistcoat.

"Thee is greatly deceived, friend Spearbill," replied the merchant, looking steadily at his visiter, and speaking very slowly; "I am a heavy loser by the bank, in which I had invested not only a large amount of my own funds, but the whole fortune of Mr. Wilmar, who made me his executor, as you are aware. It is all gone—all!"

"Bless us, Mr. Henderson—you don't tell me so! That is a heavy blow, indeed! All the wealth of my dear friend and client, Wilmar, who died in the happy conviction that he had left his family rich, and beyond the reach of ill fortune. Did you say it was all gone?"

"Every dollar. Even the house will have to be sold, to make up for the sums which I advanced, from time to time, to keep good the 'margin' of the stock:—for, like the whole world of business men, I could not think that the bank would be finally suffered to go down."

"But was not that rather imprudent, my dear Mr. Henderson?"

"Perhaps it was, friend; but I did not think so. I ventured my own money, as well as the trust confided to me. I did what I thought was right, before men, and in the fear of the Lord—mh!"

“Of course, of course, my dear Mr. Henderson—I did not presume to doubt it. But my friendship for my late respected client, Mr. Wilmar—the professional relations in which I still partly stand towards the family—you understand—makes me naturally anxious—very anxious, my dear sir—very anxious.”

“I have just finished making out a complete statement of the affairs of Mr. Wilmar’s family, and of my trust as executor under the will. I meant to leave it with thee for thy examination to-morrow. But as thee is here now, thee may as well take it. And as this is a labour done entirely for me, it is no more than just, that I should pay thy fee. Thee will find all the papers in this package—and here is a check for thy own trouble, friend Spearbill. Mh!” and the merchant, handed over a large package of papers, and a check for a thousand dollars.”

Spearbill took the papers, glanced carelessly at the check, which he folded and put in his waistcoat pocket; then getting up, he took his gold-headed stick, put on his hat, and went away.

As the door of Mr. Henderson’s private office closed upon him, the great merchant rubbed his parchment hands slowly together, and said to himself with a grim smile,—

“These world’s people hold themselves cheap—very cheap. Ira Henderson could now buy them by the score. Oh, Mammon, Mammon! How do the idolaters and the unrighteous fall down and worship thee!”

After this pious reflection, the honest quaker turned

round again on his revolving chair, and fell solemnly to the examination of his books.

“A regular old scoundrel!” said Mr. SpeARBILL to himself, as he opened the door of the first sales-room, and stepped into the street. “I am convinced that the broad-brimmed old rascal has *muttoned* the whole of Wilmar’s fortune. Lost it by the bank, indeed! Don’t believe a word of it! Catch old birds with chaff! But it will take a good deal of such chaff as this,” he continued, pulling out his check, “to catch, or hoodwink so old a bird as Nicholas SpeARBILL! We shall see! We shall see! Old Wilmar can’t have left much short of a million. If things are as I suspect, I’ll go *halves* with old Broadbrim, or I’ll *peach*, and let him down so roughly that he will never get up again!”

We need not trace this “fair business transaction” between the great merchant and the eminent lawyer, to its conclusion. It is enough to say, that they came finally to a perfect understanding; that SpeARBILL, having required something for the careful investigation of the affair, announced to the expectant ARTHUR that it was “all correct;” that Mr. Henderson could not have foreseen the catastrophe that occurred; that the whole commercial community had been as much astonished at it as himself; and that Mr. Henderson had, in fine, acted in all things according to what he had believed for the best. Mr. SpeARBILL added, that although Mr. Henderson’s own losses and advances had been very large, yet he had induced him

to postpone the sale of the house and furniture for three months, to enable the Wilmars to look about them a little, and see what was to be done.

Arthur went home with a heavy heart. Although he had made up his mind for the worst, and had impressed upon his sisters the necessity of expecting nothing favourable from the investigation of Mr. Spearbill, still a shadow of hope had remained, despite himself. Now, all was over. Even were he himself ever so well convinced that he and his family had been wrongly dealt by, yet he would have seen no way of bringing the wrong-doers to justice. Behind the protection of two such respectable and worthy men as Ira Henderson the good quaker merchant, and Nicholas Spearbill the eminent lawyer, what could he, a poor friendless boy, hope to effect? And besides, he was but seventeen—and at that age it is easier to believe in the malevolence of fortune, than the hypocrisy of men.

So, the once wealthy and brilliant Wilmars, whose smiles were courted by the most powerful, and whose favour was a passport to the most exclusive circles of society, disappeared from the public eye, like the actors and pageantry of the stage when the curtain descends, and the lights are extinguished. Their brilliant equipage laid aside, their proud bearing and commanding positions put off, they mingled in the great stream of humble humanity, that surges and struggles within its obscure banks, until it falls into the sea of eternity.

In this dark and dismal season, Dr. Felton proved a true and constant friend. Although he was unable to afford them help in money—which they would have declined, had it been offered—his advice and friendly suggestions were of incalculable benefit.

Arthur's character continued to develope and mature wonderfully, in the new and trying situation in which he was placed. He attended to every thing—provided for every thing—and in the intervals of arranging a new and humble home, and getting his mother and sisters comfortably established as circumstances would admit, he still found leisure for three or four hours' steady practice at the piano, at which he made incredible progress. The considerate kindness of Dr. Felton, who knew and highly approved his plan of becoming an artist, had introduced him to the best *maestro* in the city—who was so astonished and delighted with the progress of his young pupil, that he prophesied for him a brilliant career.

Meanwhile he turned his attention seriously to teaching; and, by the most untiring industry, he obtained in this way the principal support of the family—retiring at night, when he returned home wearied and nervous from his daily and irksome duties, to the solitude of his little chamber, where he practised and wrote till late into the night.

Yet his life was not an unhappy one—perhaps less so than had he been left to the *ennui* and temptations of idleness and wealth. He felt that he had at least an enthusiastic devotion to his art—perhaps ge-

nus: and he toiled and laboured cheerfully on, waiting unconsciously for the hour and the occasion that was to touch his nature with the divine fire of love, and thus light up in his soul the bright and inextinguishable flame of genius.

Three years had passed in this way, during which no change had occurred in the affairs of the Wilmars—except that Arthur began already to make his way as an artist. He had played several times at public concerts with success; and a number of short, light pieces which he had ventured to offer to a publisher, who kindly undertook to publish them for *nothing*, had been received with great favour. He was much sought as a teacher, and had been enabled to increase his terms to the aristocratic rate—so that his income was considerably expanded, and he was enabled to gradually add to the comforts of his mother and sisters, some faint attempts at even the luxuries and embellishments of life. But the struggle was still a hard one—and he inwardly groaned as he saw the days and months go by, without enabling him to withdraw from the irksome labour of teaching, and devote himself wholly to the pure study of his art and of the higher walks of composition.

It was at this time, that Arthur Wilmar first saw Madame de Saintlieu, at the reception of his great friend and patron, Mrs. Valentine.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GAY QUAKERESS AND HER MUSIC MASTER.

IT was an act of extreme kindness and delicacy, on the part of Mr. Henderson, and much lauded and wondered at by the members of the exclusive circle, of which he, (or rather his wife,) was the acknowledged head—that they had dismissed Signor Polvenno, the *maestro* of their only daughter, Sarah, and had committed her musical education to Arthur Wilmar, who, though a very clever young man, could not, of course, compare with the Signore, who had learned his divine art beneath the sunny skies of Italy, and who sang so *con espressione*, and whose hair and moustaches were so elegantly black, so exquisitely curled, so celestially scented! (The Signore had carefully concealed from his adorers among the barbarians of the new world, that he was originally a runaway tailor's boy in Naples, and had joined the supernumeraries at the San Carlos, where he got three cents a night for singing in the chanisses.)

The day after young Wilmar had met Madame de Saintlieu, Sarah Henderson was in her mother's draw-

ing-room, expecting her music master, and impatiently turning over the leaves of Lablache's vocal exercises,—though it was evident she was not looking for any particular lesson, as her slender white fingers dashed through the book, from beginning to end, and from end to beginning with feverish and reckless haste, as if she were striving by the occupation, to check or distract some troublesome thought. Now she stopped all at once, and running to a little table, on which stood a bronze time-piece, she compared the position of the long, black, skeleton fingers, pointing over the golden face, to those of a tiny watch which she drew from her bosom.

“Eleven o'clock!” she exclaimed, with girlish petulance, “and he always comes at half-past ten. I'm tempted to go up stairs, and not take my lesson at all. But perhaps he is ill,”—she continued. “I am sure something must have happened—he is always so punctual!”

Philadelphia, celebrated as it is for its beautiful girls, had few so beautiful as Sarah Henderson. Her mother was the daughter of a leading family of “gay Quakers”—a schism from the sect of Quakers, still holding the same fundamental doctrines, but foregoing many of the puritanic self-denials and ostentatious humilities of their stricter and more sanctimonious brethren. Although the schism is a very decided one, the gay Quakers indulging in the heinous crimes of wearing bonnets somewhat like other people's—giving parties, dancing, and enjoying music and the fine arts,

and above all, speaking a grammatical language—still the difference between them cannot be said to be actually a rupture. The families of the two schools of Quakerism hold such social and personal intercourse with each other, as the rigid regulations of the stricter sect admit of—a general co-operation in matters of trade and business is kept up by the men—and marriages, though on the whole discouraged, are not unfrequent, between members of the two branches of the chosen people.

Sarah's mother had been the great belle of the gay Quakers, in her youth; and old Ira Henderson, impressed with her beauty—or rather, enchanted with the large fortune which she would inherit from her father, whose oldest child she was—had unbent from the severity of his sectarian discipline, and proposed the match between her and his son. It was the first time that the Hendersons had sought an alliance among the “gay” portion of the brotherhood; and Sarah's father was consequently flattered by the distinction; and as the daughters themselves are permitted no voice in their conjugal relations until after marriage, the match was finally concluded. Some of the strictest among his brethren and sisters, commented with severity and wonderment upon this social dereliction; but the Hendersons were people not to be offended, and famous for always having their own way. Besides, gossiping is not a Quaker vice; and as the match was in every other respect entirely eligible, it was shortly and generally acquiesced in, by the friends of both parties.

The young couple had got along extremely well. The husband retained all the primitiveness of his speech and habits, and occasionally frowned or sighed—for Mrs. Henderson was a woman of spirit, and not to be chidden or lightly crossed, as her husband soon discovered—at the extravagance and style of the household establishment, the expensive parties and entertainments given by his wife, and the vain and frivolous manner in which their daughter was brought up and educated. Several severe domestic contests on these points, however, in which he was invariably beaten out of the field, by his clever and determined wife, showed him the folly of opposition; and he finally yielded up the management of the household to her, and withdrew entirely into his own peculiar domain of the counting-house. Here, he was the tyrant, which at home he could not be; and the face and bearing of the great Quaker merchant were a regular thermometer, as he gradually subsided from the stately and inflexible freezing point of the store, down to the zero of his true position at his grand house in Schuylkill Eleventh street.

Sarah, their only daughter, inherited the beauty, the spirit, and the taste of her mother. She was intrinsically, and at heart, as well as by education, a “gay Quaker”—and her eager and active organization, her superb health, and warm imagination, would have incited her to overstep even the “gayest” bounds of her sect, and leap, like a frisky colt, into the flowery pastures of the “world’s people.” But her mother kept

a strong hand and a watchful eye over her, and she was early taught the uselessness of attempting to revolt against the inflexible will, and the sagacious watchfulness of a mother, who, if she did not love her daughter, at least was proud of her, and had marked out for her a destiny as brilliant and immaculate as her own.

And Sarah Henderson was a girl of whom all brilliant and beautiful things might be predicted. Sensitive and fond of pleasure, yet she had intellect and enthusiasm enough to make her an ardent student of literature and art, those purifiers of the passions, those antidotes of low tastes and degrading vices. She was no dreamer, for she had never had any serious disappointments, and life had been to her a reality, as brilliant as her own dreams would have pictured it. Prosperity had made her exacting, capricious, and vehement; and should the hour ever come—as come it may and will, to queenly beauty in silken bower, as well as to lowly maiden in gown of green—the disappointed passion shall sweep through that strong and powerful heart, the storm would be a fearful and devastating one.

But at sixteen, a girl thinks not of disappointment, nor even of passion—though the seeds may have already been sown in her teeming heart. If she have vexations, they are only such as affect her vanity, or her momentary caprices. They do not enter into and form a part of life itself.

Had Sarah Henderson, however, been a student of metaphysics, and could she truthfully have examined

her own sensations, as she stood by the little French time-piece, comparing its markings with those of her dainty little watch, she would have been somewhat startled. She might have even suspected that it was a strange symptom, to be so *very* much put out by the delay of her music master! What if she should miss her music lesson for a single day?—it would be no great matter. Or, if she was so earnestly bent in making progress in her singing, could she not very profitably turn back and go over those last two lessons again? They were *very* difficult; and even her voice, beautiful and flexible as it was, and her ear, quick and sensitive as electricity, to the least disturbance of harmonic combination, had not been able to master some of those strange intervals. In fact, she ought to study those two lessons again,—Mr. Wilmar had gently insinuated as much, a few days before. But when she suddenly turned upon him with those flashing eyes, overarched by two little imperious frowns, and demanded of him whether he really thought her so stupid as to require any more study at that—he blushed, and stammered, and fumbled at the music-book—put his gloves on his head, and stuck his arm into his hat up to the elbow. And then Sarah had laughed, with a bright, merry, ringing laugh; and he had blushed and fidgeted still more—and at length, watching his opportunity, as also his hat and gloves, had fairly rushed out of the house.

She vividly recalled this scene, as she still stood, watch in hand, her eyes fixed abstractedly on the

honest and uncompromising face of the time-piece—and a smile stole out from her lips, and spread gradually over her beautiful cheeks—like morning lighting up the rosy clouds—till it melted in the flashing sunlight of her eyes.

At this moment the bell rang.

“Oh, there he is, at last!” she exclaimed, in a low voice, while a sigh of relief escaped her bosom; and, with that infinite and indescribable hypocrisy, known only to young girls, and some strains of Bellini’s music, she walked back stately to the piano, and seating herself grandly, began practising her imperfect lesson, with as much *sang froid* as if she never expected to see a music master in the world. She listened between the notes, for the sound of his step in the hall—but she would not have turned for her life. How long he was in coming in!

“So, cousin Sarah, you are at your lesson all alone to-day! I did not know you were so industrious.”

She turned round in consternation, and saw Miss Jemima Jenkins!

Without deigning to bestow a syllable upon her antiquated cousin, whom she always hated, she was hurrying out of the room, when Jemima chattered on—

“Oh no,—no Mr. Wilmar for you to-day; he is much more grandly employed. They are going to have a *matinée musicale* at Mrs. Valentine’s, and Mr. Wilmar is to play the piano. Madame de Saint-lieu is to make her first appearance. I have just come from Mrs. Valentine’s, where they are writing the in-

itations. It is going to be the grand affair, and I hurried off to tell you all about it, and especially to ask your advice."

"Who is Madame de Saintlieu?—and why cannot Arth—Mr. Wilmar—give me my lesson, because he is going to play at Mrs. Valentine's, *matinée*? I suppose it doesn't take place to-day."

"Oh bless you, no! next Wednesday, at three o'clock precisely. But Mr. Wilmar has gone by appointment to Mrs. Loftus, to rehearse with Madame de Saintlieu. He met her at Mrs. Valentine's yesterday, and she complimented him very much on his playing. He is regularly infatuated with her. Mrs. Glacée told me all about it. Now I want your advice—*do* I look best in pink or blue? We are to wear morning costume, and I am going to the store to select my dress. Sometimes I think that, by daylight, blue becomes my—"

But her auditor was gone. Rushing up stairs, holding her hands tightly to her heart, she threw herself on her bed, and burst into tears.

Poor little gay Quakeress! The first storm is rising afar in your brilliant horizon!

The incorrigible old maid, having done all the mischief, and inflicted all the pain, which it is the "manifest destiny" of that class of beings—the furies of the Greeks, translated into wigs and petticoats—to do and inflict—looked about with the most innocent surprise at what she had done, and went trotting up stairs to find her cousin, Mrs. Henderson, to repeat her wonderful budget of news from the Valentines, and to dis-

cuss the important point, with her relative, whether she should go to the concert in blue or pink.

Mrs. Henderson had but one serious, inflexible, unqualified hatred in the world—and that was Mrs. Valentine. She had a quiet sort of detestation, indeed, for her vain, tattling, conceited cousin, Jemima, who was the female mercury of the town, and spent her whole life in gadding from one house to the other, telling every body exactly the thing which they most disliked to hear. Practice had made her perfect in this delightful employment. She was a moral probe, and could hit the sore spot in the dark, without ever missing. She was regarded as a general nuisance, by all circles—by Quakers, both grave and gay, (to the latter sect of which she belonged,) as well as by the world's people. But she was not to be got rid of, as her position and character were unimpeachable, and her fortune was very considerable, and held entirely in her own right. Had she left off her sentiment and orange wreaths, and taken honestly and openly to snuff and porter, there doubtless might still have been found some desperate young man, so desperate, both in purse and purpose, as to have married her for the sake of her fortune—and a hard bargain the poor fellow would have had! But even the boldest and most unscrupulous of adventurers shrinks from that mingling of infantile smiles, and false teeth, wreaths and wrinkles, pouts and prepared chalk, which goes to make up the modern, (we beg pardon, we mean the ancient,) old maid, and reminds the beholder of a peripatetic sam-

ple of Laurel Hill, sent round as a specimen of its highly ornamental and flowery tombs.

Mrs. Henderson received the news of the doings at Mrs. Valentine's, with the most withering disdain, though in her inmost heart she was chafing with spite and envy.

"Infamous creature!" she exclaimed; "how dare she go on at this rate, in the face of such a career as hers! I declare, the police ought to take her up as a vagrant, and shut up her house as a disreputable establishment: there certainly can't be a worse one! And you, cousin! I am astonished that you dare be seen in such company—and most especially, that you can come to me with news of her doings. You choose your subjects badly, cousin. What do I care for your Madame de Saintlieu? No doubt some French Trollope, who has been driven away, as too bad even for Paris. She has found a precious, and doubtless a congenial patroness!"

"Why, cousin, you astonish me! I thought you cared nothing about these people; and yet you are positively angry because they are going to have a *matinée musicale*!"

"No, I am not—I am only angry because you have come to tell me of it. I hate to hear that woman's name—it makes an honest woman distrust honesty, when such creatures can make a figure in the world."

"I am quite sorry I said a word about it, my dear cousin—I thought you would like to hear the news."

“When does your *matinée musicale*, as you call it, take place?”

“Next Wednesday, at three o’clock precisely—morning costumes. Now, dear cousin, *do* be good-natured for a moment, and tell me which you think I look the best in, by daylight, red or blue? Sometimes I think one, and sometimes the other. Do tell me your opinion.”

“Both, I should think.”

“Really! Well, I never thought of that! It is a new idea—quite splendid, in fact! Cousin, I am very much obliged to you—I must hurry down to the store. Good bye!”

After she had gone, Mrs. Henderson sat for a moment, in deep and angry thought; then, ringing her bell with unusual violence, she ordered the carriage, and prepared to go out.

“And send Miss Henderson to me,” she said, as the maid went out.

Sarah came in, having dried her eyes as well as she could—though they were still red and showery.

“You look ill, my child—what is the matter?”

“Only a very bad head-ache, mamma—I was lying down.”

“Well, go and put on your things—I am going out; and a drive will do you good.”

“Where are you going, mamma?”

“To call on Mrs. Attarby.”

“Mrs. Attarby! I thought you hated her, because she is an actress.”

“Not because she is an actress on the stage, but because she continues to be one after she has left it. But I have special reasons for seeing her. You can remain in the carriage—I shall only stay a moment.”

“I will be ready.” And as the young girl went out, she said to herself, “Are we not all actors? I am sure mamma is—and I know I am—though I have played my part badly. I will get mamma to let me go in, and take a lesson from her and Mrs. Attarby.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST REHEARSAL.

MADAME DE SAINTLIEU had entirely forgotten her impromptu rehearsal, for which she had engaged to be at home to Mr. Wilmar. When he came, he found her playing with her two little girls, in Mrs. Loftus' drawing-room. The oldest girl was about six—a bright, healthy, elastic creature. She was teaching her sister, a little affair of three years or so, and who could hardly toddle, to dance the polka, while mamma, looking over her shoulder at the funny little manœuvres, with a smile of ineffable affection and playfulness, was drumming away at the piano.

Wilmar stopped, and stood in the door, admiring the pretty and natural picture before him. Madame de Saintlieu did not see him; but the children did, breaking up their lesson in confusion, and coming up to her. She then turned to the door, and seeing Wilmar, motioned him in with a cordial welcome.

“Oh, I had forgotten you, Mr. Wilmar,” she said. “How very kind of you to come! Run away, my darlings! That will do for to-day.”

The children went towards the door; then the oldest came back to her mother, and whispered mysteriously in her ear.

"Yes, certainly. Mr. Wilmar won't mind, I dare say. My little girls want to stay and hear mamma sing. May they do so, Mr. Wilmar?"

"Madame, it will be a happiness for me to think that my ill-timed appearance does not drive them away from you. I ought really to apologize for intruding."

"On the contrary, it is I who ought to apologize. But I have become so accustomed to your American inaccuracy about appointments, that I really had not fixed ours seriously in my memory. But, as you are here, if you please, we will go through the *pieces de resistance* of our entertainment."

Wilmar, who at first had felt all his shyness and awkwardness returning, insensibly lost consciousness of himself, and was soon seated in front of Madame de Saintlieu, with an immense portfolio of music between them on a little table, and conversing quite at his ease.

"I suppose of course we must have something very high and grand in the Italian way," she asked.

"Oh, I suppose so, of course, all our young misses sing scenas and cavatinas. Something will certainly be expected of you in that style."

"I am sorely tempted to disappoint them, if only for the sake of novelty. I am heartily tired of grand arias in the drawing-room."

"But you do not dislike the Italian school?"

“I might as well dislike Greek architecture, or Raffaele’s pictures. It is the *only* school that has combined the grace of music and the power of passion into an art.”

“Ah! I thought so! I felt it must be so, notwithstanding the wretched disappointments I have alone listened to.”

“It is for this very reason, that I hate to see the grand and sublime pictures of the Italian opera dragged out of their frames, cut up into fragments, and distributed with the tea and muffins around the drawing-room.”

“I feel that you are right, yet it would be cruel to deprive us, who cannot have the opera entire, of the pleasure and profit of enjoying even its fragments.”

“You must have a difficult public to please, more exacting than critical.”

“That is the precise truth, the idea that I have always been trying in vain to express. Our general public know, literally, nothing of music, and care nothing for it: and when they listen to a real artist, they are disappointed, because they do not derive their money’s worth of pleasure.”

“That is the way with an ignorant public, art suffers in their estimation, because it *is* art—because it is not something else—something that they like and can understand. It was so for many, many years in London. Indeed, Italian opera has never flourished naturally out of Italy. Even in Paris, it is an exotic—more criticised than enjoyed.”

"You are flattering my self-conceit enormously, by uttering my very thoughts. You learned to sing in Italy."

"I studied there—I ought not to say I learned to sing: not every one who studies does that."

"I am dying to hear you—if you will forgive my madness—I meant—I—really"—

"Certainly, with all my heart. What shall we try? Here is the prayer from *Favorita*—let us try that."

Wilmar's fingers trembled, his face flushed, and his heart beat. But it was now, however, the artist, and not the man, who was excited. He felt that he was about to hear what he had heretofore only dreamed of—the impassioned *sympathetic* expression of dramatic sentiment, through the language of music; that language which, instead of narrowing, restricting, and breaking up the sentiment intrusted to it, ennobles and exalts passion itself, and gives to it a divine and immortal utterance.

She began, but it was in such thrilling, touching, heart-breaking accents, that the trembling player forgot his keys, and turned upon her, gasping for breath, as he listened. He was spell-bound.

The accompaniment is very slight, and she went on for a few bars without it; when, missing a leading chord to which she had been accustomed, she stooped over Wilmar as she sang, feeling with her soft moist fingers for the notes she wanted—his feverish hands lying strained and motionless upon the keys. He

could not have stirred for worlds; and, carried away by the despair, the anguish, the love of that terrible prayer, Madame de Saintlieu went on, striking the chords as the modulations melted into each other, or broke into startling combinations. She ceased, and went back to her seat, taking no notice of his strange conduct.

At length he recovered his voice.

“I have found it!” he cried, in wild excitement; “I know now what it is—I have dreamed aright. Yes—I have heard that in my dreams a thousand times. Oh, sing it again! I will not fail you this time!” and he grasped the keys, as if determined that they should not escape him.

She smiled, and standing up at the piano, was ready to begin.

Wilmar was right—he did not fail her, but followed her with such exquisite truth and feeling, that voice and instrument vibrated together, as if one had proceeded from the other.

“Ah, you deserve to worship art,” she said. “Few are the happy ones who do. For, with this divine gift, what ought to make us unhappy?”

Wilmar was bewildered: all his wild dreams of art had suddenly become true, and stood revealed before him. No wonder that he mingled his worship of art with adoration for her who had first embodied it. He trembled violently with his emotions; and not daring to look up, he unconsciously caught up the youngest child, a timid fearful little thing, and pressed her con-

vulsively in his arms. The child screamed, and palpitating like a frightened bird, glided from his arms, and ran sobbing to her mother. Her sister stepped valiantly before her, and with flashing eyes, stood in an attitude of defiance, as if to protect and defend her. Wilmar was abashed, and coloured with shame and confusion.

"There, my little warrior," said Madame de Saintlieu, with a smile; "that will do. Mr. Wilmar did not hurt your sister."

The girl drew back, and took her little sister by the hand—keeping a watchful eye upon Wilmar, as if not quite sure of his pacific intentions. Madame de Saintlieu and the young man both looked at the two children; and as they withdrew their glances, their eyes met.—Wilmar blushed again, more deeply than before. Madame de Saintlieu suffered her eyes to rest upon him for an instant, with an expression full of interest.

"You are very young to feel so deeply," she said. "You must have suffered."

"Ah, yes," he replied, "for others: we do not suffer for ourselves."

"That is true only of those who devote themselves to art—or to religion."

"Are they not the same?"

"Perhaps. I do not think, for example, that there can be a prayer more sincere than breathes through that music," pointing to the *partition* they had just been using.

“And the penitence of a bereaved and disappointed heart, that comes brokenly back to cast itself at the feet of its Creator,” said Wilmar, catching the deep enthusiasm that trembled in her voice; “where has that ever been so touchingly expressed as in Fernando’s wailing, ‘*spirito gentil*’?”

“I see you understand the *Favorita*. You think, then, that our ‘prayer’ will do for the concert?”

“Yes, yes—but what shall come after it?”

“Oh, we must fall in with the spirit of the occasion, and give them a ballad, or a chansonette, or perhaps a polka,” she replied, with an almost imperceptible shrug of disdain. “But you—what do you mean to play? Something of your own, I hope.”

“I have written nothing. I feel the fever, but not the strength of composition: and yet, I sometimes dare to hope that the power is latent in me. But I am weak and wavering—I need some sure guidance in my blind struggles after excellence. Befriend me—tell me how to begin, how to go on, in order to extricate the chaos of harmonies that come unbidden to me every hour, and seem striving for expression.”

“You will smile at my old-fashioned stereotyped advice. It is, to study the old masters of harmony and counterpoint. They seem dry and meager, in these florid days of ornament and over-dressing. Yet they are the source of true grandeur and repose—the only foundation for style and sustained individualism. Imitate them you need not—but once imbued with their severe and puritanic spirit, you can never escape

its influence, never become trifling or corrupt. For the rest, your own inspiration must do it all."

"I thank you sincerely. I have only needed the encouragement of some one like you, to confirm me in my determination to commence this arduous and almost appalling work."

"It need be neither arduous nor appalling. Look at it merely as a series of dry lessons in the technicalities of mathematics, and master only a few of them every day. Gradually they will all become familiar to you—be your obedient slaves, and minister to you of their own will, whenever they are needed."

"It must have cost immense labour to have attained that mechanical perfection of method which makes the sense of method lost, in listening to you."

"I do not know—I scarcely remember. I certainly worked hard; but I think it was rather to understand and feel the *meaning* of what I sang, than a mere exercise of the different notes. I am a very poor practitioner—I do not know whether I could sing a scale correctly, merely standing by itself, as an exercise."

"Yet, your advice to me is on a different principle."

"No—the lessons of the old masters of harmony become in themselves inspirations, the moment they are comprehended. Like the murmur of the sea, they contain within themselves all the harmonies of nature."

"Does nature, then, actually express music? I had thought differently."

"Yes—only the composition is on so grand a scale, that the different notes seem to us discordant and far apart. What appears fragmentary and imperfect to our narrow sense, is but a portion of that universal harmony which is ever present to the infinite comprehension."

"What, then, is art?"

"It is the infinite, compressed to the compass of a single brain. Every true artist carries a picture of the whole universe in his soul."

"Your words are light to one who walks and struggles in darkness. You have re-created me. I am no longer what I was."

"You mean, merely, that I have furnished the clue by which you can explore the labyrinths of your own being. You were yesterday what you are to-day."

"Yes, yesterday—because yesterday, I saw you."

He stopped suddenly, and grew alternately pale and red, frightened at his own boldness.

Mrs. Loftus now came in. She was afraid, she said, that she was too late. Was the rehearsal over?

No—they had just begun—they were discussing the principles of art.

"You have an apt scholar, Madame de Saintlieu," said Mrs. Loftus, with a meaning smile; "be careful that you do not teach him too much!"

It was her turn now to blush. But she rose hastily, and going to the piano, proposed that they should sing another Italian piece. "I suppose," she said to

Mrs. Loftus, "we must have at least two grand scenas, or something at least as grandiloquent?"

"Oh, I know nothing about all that—arrange it to suit yourselves. But I should like to hear something new, if only to be in advance of the public."

"Well—here is Schubert's *Serenade*: we must contrive to get that in, somehow—though it really should be sung by a man."

If Wilmar had been captivated by the tenderness and feeling which Madame de Saintlieu had imparted to Leonora's prayer, he was overwhelmed with the passion of the *Serenade*. He could not speak—he could scarcely breathe. Even Mrs. Loftus was overcome. She went up to her friend and took her in her arms.

"My dear friend!" said she, with animation, "if the barbarians of this our democratic realm don't fall down and worship you—or build you a temple—or carry you on their shoulders—or some other such folly, they deserve to be humbugged all their lives! I declare, I never heard singing like *that* before. It is actually love, and pleading, and passion. One doesn't think of the music at all."

"We don't think of the etymology and the other grammatical ologies, when we read Shakspeare," said Madame de Saintlieu, with a gay laugh. "It ought to be the same with music. Those who listen to it merely to analyze the quavers and cadenzas, have no right to listen to it at all. The musical snuff-box does

all that much better than any voice or instrument can do.”

“I do not know whether you are most admirable as critic or as artist,” replied Mrs. Loftus.

“Or as woman!” ejaculated Wilmar, to his own heart. Poor Wilmar! Madame de Saintlieu had well said, “I wish I could help him?” For he could not help himself!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TWO ACTRESSES.

MRS. HENDERSON and her daughter found Mrs. Attarby at home. On the way, Sarah had found means to persuade her mother to take her up stairs with her, to see the great actress, and had artfully drawn from her the motive of this unusual and extraordinary visit.

"Surely," said the curious and observant Sarah to herself, as they were shown into a large handsome library, over the drawing rooms; "this doesn't look much like what mamma said. I should take Mrs. Attarby for anything but an actress."

Mrs. Attarby was a large, noble-looking woman, with a natural grandeur and repose, reminding you insensibly of the majesty of ancient art. Although superficially correct, as to Mrs. Attarby's appearance presenting none of the usual or supposed indications of her profession, yet intrinsically she was wrong. To a critical and philosophic observer, no woman ever looked so eminently fitted for being an actress. She seemed capable, at a glance, of embodying the extremes of human passion, dignity, and suffering. The character-

istic expression of her large face was, energy in repose. When she slowly raised her large heavy eyes, like a cloud charged with electricity, resting over the still tranquil horizon, she seemed capable of anything, of every thing.

As her visitors entered, Mrs. Attarby rose, and coming towards them with the easy alacrity of well-bred politeness, welcomed them cordially.

“Good morning, Mrs. Henderson,” she said, in a frank, joyous voice, holding out both hands to her visiter, with the palms upwards, and in such an engaging friendly way, that the prudish and puritanical quaker—prudish and puritanical, at least, to the world’s people, and most of all to the people of that mimic world, the stage—could not help placing her own formless and undeveloped fingers in those flexible, mobile, and expressive palms.

No man can have been long a close observer of the physical differences in mankind, formed by the differences of internal character and habits, without becoming, to a certain extent, a believer in palmistry. That science, however absurdly it may have been abused by the dishonesty of its professors, and the ignorance and superstition of other times, is undoubtedly as nearly connected with the real and noble science of physiology, as chemistry with alchemy, or astronomy with astrology. All great and valuable discoveries in science, are preceded by partial revelations, here and there the result of accident or solitary study: and the bigotry and ignorance of mankind—always the parent

of selfishness—ever seek to connect these discoveries with individual hopes, fears, and interests, and furnish the cunning and designing with their most powerful instruments over the minds of men.

The meeting of Mrs. Henderson and Mrs. Attarby, was a curious and interesting social phenomenon. The haughty, exclusive, disdainful, leader of society, was constrained, artificial, evidently *acting* an ill-studied part; while the actress herself was as natural, as un-studied, as stately in her yielding grace, as a forest tree. It was a pity that so instructive a “situation,” should not have taken place before the public. But it had one observant, quick-witted, keen-sighted auditor. Sarah smiled, with an expression it was difficult to analyze, as she watched the meeting of the two actresses.

“I am truly happy that you have at length found me out, my dear madam, and beaten me up in my retreat. And you, Miss Henderson—although I have not yet had the pleasure of being presented to you, it does not need—you are too faithful a souvenir of your beautiful mother to require naming—I assure you that you have given me great pleasure by coming to me in this friendly and unceremonious way.”

“I know my visit must seem very strange,” said Mrs. Henderson, striving to regain her usual frigid composure; “it is so unexpected—so” —

“Every pleasure is unexpected, my dear Mrs. Henderson; they are so few, in this life, that one soon ceases altogether to look for them. But when, by chance,

one does come—and especially in such a shape,” she added, with a gracious smile at mother and daughter—“it is so much the more welcome.”

“Madam, you completely conquer me by your goodness. I must frankly own that I have been heretofore restrained from cultivating your acquaintance, by the absurd prejudices, as you will call them, of my education, as well as from many foolish and idle rumours, to which I myself must have been quite as foolish and idle, to have paid the least attention. I honestly owe you this confession and this apology, which I freely make.”

“Do not let us say another word about it. I have met with so much bitterer things lately, than neglect and silence, that I have no room in my memory for any such partial injustice. Besides, to tell you the truth, I really have given cause for a great deal of gossip, by systematically outraging many of the minor requirements of good society. This has been done partly from a natural impatience of control or supervision by any but the prompter and the call boy; and partly from a disdain of much that I have seen and suffered since I assumed my present mode of life. So you see that I have been myself as much to blame as you: I pray you, let us cry quits, and be friends.”

“Willingly, most willingly. Still, before I can accept the treaty, I must make another confession. My visit, even now, is not so much one of good will—or was not until I met you—as of pure selfishness. I came to ask a very great favour of you.”

"Oh, then it is all right, and we shall be sworn friends forever. Let me know what it is immediately."

"The fact is," continued Mrs. Henderson, colouring, and striving in vain to overcome her embarrassment; "it is altogether a very selfish affair, and you will think all the worse of me when you know it. In a word, then, that Mrs. Valentine has turned the heads of everybody, with a *matinée musicale*, which she is to give on Wednesday, at which she is to present a *protégé* of Mrs. Loftus, Madame de Saintlieu—and—and—I was thinking if you would favour us with your company to our family dinner on Wednesday,"——

"Say no more—I accept at once. I am sure you could not think any apology necessary for such an invitation."

"Stop, stop! you must hear me out, Mrs. Attarby," said Mrs. Henderson, colouring. "I must add that in the evening there is to be a little *conversazione*—and I was in hopes that, perhaps, you would condescend to ——"

"Ah, ha!" said Mrs. Attarby, laughing, and for a moment enjoying her visiter's confusion; "I think I understand you, at last. You wish to see me mounted on the *cothurnus* once more! You, who would never come to such a dreadful place as the theatre, to give countenance to trifling amusements! Oh, fy! my dear madam! How could you!——"

"Pardon me, madam," said Mrs. Henderson, stung by the reproach, although it was spoken jestingly, and drawing herself up somewhat stiffly; "we will speak

no more of it—I have again to crave your forgiveness.”

“But we *will* speak more of it, my dear friend, we will speak of nothing else. I will do it with the greatest pleasure; in fact, I shall enjoy it hugely. To tell you the truth, I am horribly bored at missing all my accustomed darling excitements of the stage, which are but scantily repaid by the poor fun of aggravating my neighbours by my systematic *bizarrerries*. What shall it be? You shall judge for yourself. Here is my Shakspeare—there, pick and choose. What do *you* say, Miss Henderson? Come, madam, let us leave it to your daughter. I warrant she is a better student of Shakspeare than you are.”

“Well, child, since Mrs. Attarby is so kind—so very kind—I leave the choice to you.”

The blushing Sarah took the book, and turning over the pages, paused at those magic names, to whose utterance the heart of youth and love ever responds, as if they were indeed a spell.

“Ah, I guessed as much!” said the actress, with a mischievous smile. “So fair and sweet a Juliet could never be so cruel as to overlook the gentle Romeo.—That is settled, then—Romeo and Juliet it shall be. I will clip and trim it of every thing extraneous, or inappropriate to a drawing-room reading, and you may announce me to your public, Mrs. Manager, in such terms as your majesty may please. Oh, it will be delightful!”

“And Mr. Attarby,—I hope we shall have the pleasure of his company, with yours, at dinner?”

“Oh yes,—that is, if he is not already engaged at the rival house. Should Mrs. Manager Valentine have sent him a valentine edict, through Mrs. Gracée, her stage manager, he will not dare to disobey. However, he will at least drop in during the evening. The proprieties shall all be observed—never fear Mr. Attarby for that.”

Every thing being thus happily arranged, Mrs. Henderson rose and took her leave, with many expressions of thanks, while her heart beat high with her anticipated triumph over her “rival manager,” as Mrs. Attarby had not inappropriately styled her enemy, Mrs. Valentine. For a moment the two ladies stood face to face, each curiously scanning the other, and endeavouring to penetrate the disguise of which each suspected the other to wear. Then, mutual invitations were exchanged—Mrs. Henderson promised, in reply to an appealing look from her daughter, to let Sarah come and spend a day with her new acquaintance. The TWO ACTRESSES separated—the curtain fell—and the prologue of our play was over.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FAST MAN.

IN our democratic country, party spirit runs as high at those *parties* that take place in society, as in those formed and directed in political committee rooms. Every class has its cliques and family interests, which unite or divide into factions, who wage war with all the acrimony and perseverance of a presidential campaign. The difference is, that in society, parties are made up and controlled by women, and that their triumphs are directed to the gratification of vanity instead of avarice. In both, however, ambition, or the love of power, is equally conspicuous; but we must give the women the credit of greater tact and versatility in their schemes and manœuvres, than their male counterparts. In fact, history shows, that in all ages, women have been the most adroit and successful politicians; and our friend "Sam" may congratulate himself that the ladies are all in his favour—though, paradoxically enough, they are not opposed to "foreign influence," especially if it has bright eyes, and wears a handsome black moustache!

In another important particular, there is great resemblance between the managers of political and so-

cial parties—their mutual tendency to make use of civilization, for the purpose of attaining or keeping popularity or power. What the “b’hoy” is to the politician, the “fast man” is to the lady managers of our “first families.” Although neither of these worthies is very highly respected by those who employ him, yet they are both treated with great outward consideration—a combination of fear and flattery, exactly adapted to the mental calibre of these equivocal genera of the human species, which gratifies *their* vanity, and prevents them from ever suspecting that they are being merely made use of to serve the vanity of others.

With the rowdy of the politicians we are not going to meddle at present. He will find his turn in due time. Our present object is the “fast man.”

Edward Ingraham, whose name has already appeared in our pages as the lover of Helen Wilmar, was a thorough specimen of a “fast man.” Until the rupture of his match with Helen, her gentle influence had greatly restrained his natural recklessness, and besides, he was then very young, and had not lost all shame and principle. His, mother, too, had heretofore exerted a restraining, if not a beneficial influence over him. She was the sister-in-law of Mrs. Valentine, and had been left a widow very soon after her marriage with Mr. Ingraham, with an only son—Edward—whom she had brought up in the expectation of making a great figure in the fashionable world,—that narrow circle by which all her hopes were bounded. On learning the loss of the Wilmars’ for-

tune, as has been seen, the match between Edward and Helen Wilmar had been peremptorily broken off. Edward, who really had a great liking for the girl, pleaded feebly for her at first; but the inflexible will of the mother prevailed, and he was compelled to give her up. This made him reckless and dissipated, and he plunged headlong into every folly. About a year afterwards, his mother died suddenly. He found himself master of his own actions, and of almost incalculable wealth, with none to dictate to him, or even remonstrate with him. After a year spent in Paris—where he cut but a sorry figure—plucked and mortified, he returned to Philadelphia, took up his abode in his aunt's house, and recommenced his life as a "fast man." Since then, he had expanded into full bloom; he was a perfect type of his class—a roué, a gambler, a libertine, a spendthrift, ready, at any moment, for a "spree," and always confoundedly bored in the morning with the effects of his overnight's debauch, and not fairly coming to himself until the afternoon, after he had imbibed "drinks" enough to get up steam and reach the general level of perpetual tipsiness. When he had arrived at this point, he was ready for anything—for the gambling-house, the dance-house, the drinking-cellar, the brothel, or any other place or enterprise which any of his gang might propose.

Ned Ingraham's immense fortune was held entirely in his own right, being inherited from his father, who had been killed, when his son was three years old, in

a fit of apoplexy, brought on by a debauch with the grooms and jockeys at a horse-race. The son was profuse in his expenditure of money, simple in his wits, easily led and gulled, and consequently a tremendous favourite with all the genteel sharpers, black-legs, and swindlers about town. A gang of these worthies attended him in his nightly peregrinations among the billiard-rooms, raffling-shops, eating-houses, and other haunts of vice and dissipation. They observed towards him the greatest deference—wore waistcoats and trowsers as nearly his pattern as their limited credit at the tailor's would allow,—rode his horses, borrowed or won his money, ate his suppers, and carefully carried him home o' nights, when he was too far gone to help himself.

“Cousin Neddy” was a great pet of Mrs. Valentine, who had divined that the endearing epithet of “cousin” sounded better than the antiquated stateliness of “my nephew,” and besides, gave room for a charitable doubt as to her own age greatly in her favour. His room was one of the most elegant in her house; although he was looked upon with a hopeless terror by Mr. Valentine—a weakly, timid invalid, who had long since given up his merchandising, and retired from the world, to nurse that health which he had lost in looking after his great money matters. American readers will experience no surprise in being thus casually introduced to the husband of one of the principal personages of our history—such instances of the nonentity of husbands with dashing and fashion-

able wives, are unfortunately by no means rare. Whether Mr. Valentine will reappear at all in our pages, depends altogether upon circumstances. At present, neither we nor Mrs. Valentine can make any farther use of him.

But cousin Neddy was a different sort of personage. His immense popularity among the young men about town, had been often used to promote the views of this bold and experienced party tactician—while his great wealth, and a really handsome face and person, made him acceptable to the women, both old and young, and “plated with gold” the innumerable and notorious sins, in the commission of which his life was passed.

Of course Mrs. Valentine had not failed to send forth her cousin to trumpet the glories of her forthcoming entertainment. One morning after the affair was settled, she sent up, after taking breakfast in her own room, to know whether Mr. Ingraham was at leisure.

“Certainly—always at Mrs. Valentine’s service.”

He was sitting in a velvet dressing-gown, in the flashiest Palais Royal cut and pattern—in fact it had been manufactured in that emporium of the “latest fashions,” expressly for the American market—and smoking a cigar; while a half-emptied glass of brandy and water stood on the little marble table beside him.

“Good morning, Coz,” said Mrs. Valentine, entering the room without ceremony.

“Aw—how do, aunty!” the young man replied,

rocking back in his arm-chair, looking listlessly up over his forehead, and puffing a whiff of smoke into her face. "Sit down—smoke won't hurt you, it's a genuine *puras*—very good! What can I do for you?"

"You have bestirred yourself about my *matinée musicale*, haven't you?"

"Ya—yes—aw! I believe Gibbs was jabbering something about its being all right, this morning, while I was being tumbled into bed. Do you want my help in the programme, aunty? I'll sing 'em a solo on the trombone, that shall astonish their weak nerves! Just listen!" and taking his cigar from his lips, he put one fist to his mouth, and with the other made motions *à la trombone*, at the same time uttering a series of brays, which certainly bore no slight resemblance to the trombone part in Max Maretzek's version of *Rigoletto*.

"Oh, Ned, for heaven's sake, stop!" exclaimed his aunt, stopping her ears; "you'll kill me!"

"What! you underrate my musical abilities, then? Well—it's the fate of genius, as somebody says in the play. What *do* you want of me, then?"

"Why, I want you to go about particularly amongst the young men, and get all the women up in arms to come. And I want you to take a package of tickets, and sell them amongst your acquaintances. Get hold of some of the reporters, or penny-a-liners, or whatever they are called, and give them the information, as a very great favour, and a profound secret. I am

determined it shall be the greatest affair of the season. The Hendersons have already heard of it, and will no doubt give one of their grand dinners on the same day. But I shall outshine them this time, any how."

"A very fine girl, though, that Sally Henderson, aunt! I've pretty much made up my mind to marry her, and get you all into an uncommon muss, like Romeo and Juliet, you know. Valentine and Henderson. Not a bad idea, indeed! And then the fun of carrying her away from old Broadbrim there! Ha! ha! I'll do it, aunt!"

"Nonsense! Don't be so stupid! Go and do what I tell you, and let Sarah Henderson alone."

"But I won't, though, and—I tell you my mind's made up. I met Sarah the other day at Parkinson's, looking as fresh as a rose: and I know she would have got into a chat with me, if it hadn't been for her mother. It will be glorious fun—Romeo and Juliet in real life!"

"Well, well—never mind all that, now. Dress yourself and do what I tell you. There are the tickets—mind, you must sell them all, or I shall have to pay for them. Don't be a good-for-nothing now, but remember what I tell you."

"Well, aunt, you know you always manage to get what you want out of me. But you must promise me not to get jealous of little Sally Henderson, and cross any of my plans there,—or I won't stir for you, and the *matinée musicale* may go to the d—l."

“I promise, you naughty boy—because I know you are only trying to vex me. So, go along.”

Mrs. Valentine having taken her leave, Edward got up, walked to a psyche glass in the corner, and surveying himself complacently, said:

“I don’t think little Sally can withstand that, eh, Mr. Edward Ingraham? As for aunty, she’ll be furious, I know—but who cares? I am my own master, and she—isn’t my mistress—chem!”

He then set about the serious task of dressing—having rung the bell for Gibbs, an English valet, to whose judicious management and experience Mr. Edward Ingraham owed his escape from being taken in public for what he was in private—a vulgarian and a decided “flash cove.” Having finished his cigar, and emptied a second glass of brandy and water, our fast man took a final survey of himself in the glass, and sallied forth upon his mission.

While he walks leisurely down Chestnut street, we will stop an instant to look in upon Mrs. Valentine, who is seated at a writing-desk, reading over a note which she has just finished.

“There—I think that will do the coxcomb’s business. He little thinks that I know all about the French girl in Cherry street—she’ll soon settle his new penchant for Miss Henderson. ‘Mdlle Rosalie Durand, No. — Cherry street.’ Now, cousin Neddy, I think I have the game in my own hands. I can’t spare you, my dear, stupid, handsome cousin, on any account!”

Leaving our hero’s aunt-cousin to despatch her note

to Middle Durand, we will overtake and accompany that gentleman on his afternoon and evening rambles. Our history would neither be truthful nor complete, if we did not let our readers see a little of what is called "life" by the "fast" and rising generation.

His first stopping-place was a fashionable drinking-shop, or "coffee-house," as the grandiloquence of the times has named these places—a greater number of which are to be found in Philadelphia, than perhaps in any other city on the continent. Every country has its customs, as the polite Frenchman remarked, when the mob at the pit door of the theatre tore his coat off his back. The Indian smokes over everything—the Arab divides his salt with the stranger—the Englishman shakes hands; but over every transaction of life, trifling or important, the American "takes a drink." If we conclude a bargain, the party who fancies he has got the best of it, immediately invites his victim to "take a drink." If we bet on the election, swap horses, or make up a marriage for our children, we take a drink. It is even related of a pious deacon, that, on announcing to the assembled vestry the gratifying fact that the debt incurred for painting the parson's house, had been paid off by the congregation, he concluded by inviting his fellow-members to go across the way and take a drink.

At the fashionable hotel, the "bar," which has been kept open till two or three o'clock in the night, serving out hot shot, like the Lancaster battery at Sebastopol, is re-opened at six or seven in the morning, in readi-

ness for the thirsty travellers from west and south, who generally take a cock-tail before putting on their boots, and another before breakfast. This scattering fire—with now and then a variation in the shape of a bottle of sarsaparilla or lemon soda, in favour of somebody with a private head-ache—is kept up till eleven o'clock, when the regular “lunch” begins. Citizens now rush in, from store, office, and counting-house, intent upon making up for the deficiencies of their sloppy home breakfast, with a plate of fried tripe and pickled cucumbers, and a brandy smash.

It is not until in the afternoon and evening, however, that the heavy business of the bars begins; and it was about three o'clock, when Mr. Ingraham made his first call at one of these regular haunts, where, at the proper hours, he was sure of meeting several of his companions. He had evidently been waited for, on the present occasion, and his arrival was greeted by a shout of welcome. “Drinks all round” were immediately called for, although several glasses were still unemptied. However, it won't do to hang back, in such a crowd as this. Thirsty or not, tipsy or drunk, drink you must; and the greatest of all possible fun, is to get one of the party so far gone that he cannot stand. He is then taken home in triumph, or put to bed at a hotel, while his companions resume their travels in high glee.

Round after round of drinks was called on and disposed of; and Ingraham at length began to feel, as he declared, “about right.” It was then proposed to

sally forth, in pursuit of the regular business of the night—as it was already getting dark, and there was no time to be lost. They therefore fortified themselves with another drink, lighted fresh cigars, and scrambled up stairs into the street—boldly elbowing off the sidewalk every small boy, or old man, and insulting every woman, they encountered.—Wherever an underground temple of the bacchanalian god, belching its reeking gas-light across the walk, showed that the perpetual saturnalia was going on beneath, our hero and his friends would make a rushing descent, and renew their potations—flanked by occasional dishes of ham and eggs, sausages, and deviled crabs, cooked last week, and kept stewing in dishes swimming in hot water. Then they looked in at the billiard-rooms and bowling-alleys—always commencing and ending the visit with a drink. At one of these places, having got elevated to the quarrelsome point, they interrupted a couple of gentlemen who were quietly pursuing their game. The gentlemen resented—a general row took place—and our heroes came off second best—one with a smashed hat, another with his coat torn, and Ingraham himself, with a bloody nose. Having, by the aid of the various shops which these diversified disasters called into requisition, repaired damages, they stopped at Jones', took a drink, and started again, in quest of more “fun.”

Our party of “nice young men” next, in their search after fun, found their way into a “raffling shop,” a low, dirty, sickening room, opening from a blind al-

ley, and filled with unwashed, tipsy, swearing rowdies, crowding around the dice-tables, drinking and quarrelling over every throw. Having taken a turn at the dice, and a drink all round, (they were now at that point where all liquor, good or bad, tasted alike to them,) they crossed over the narrow alley, and dived into a dark and noisome cellar, where a bagatelle table in one corner was in brisk operation—the balls, of various sizes and discoloured by age to the hue of their own tobacco-stained teeth, being chipped and notched on all sides, and the one being apparently constructed from the remains of a fifty cent umbrella-handle. However, it was all “*couleur de rose*” to our elated heroes—and *such* fun to knock the balls into the holes, and then cheat one another in counting the game!

After some half-a-dozen rounds, however, even this refined and intellectual amusement grew monotonous; and our friends started in pursuit of something more piquant and exciting. This, under the direction of the unfaltering Ingraham, who was “up” to every thing, was soon found. Entering a small but handsome bar, fitted up with considerable elegance, where they of course all took another drink, they made their way through a dark hall, up a narrow staircase, and into a large and handsome apartment, composed of the two parlours of the first floor. In the front room was a large table covered with green cloth, around which were seated and standing some fifteen or twenty men, watching eagerly the rattling of the dice, and chaffer-

ing for the chances, as each one made his throw. The most conspicuous personage in the room, however, was a large, fine-looking woman, of twenty-five or thirty, with a fair skin and a grass-green dress. Her round, fat arm was bare to the shoulder, and her boddice was strained almost to bursting. That is "Miss Catharine"—whether she has, or ought to have, any other name, is none of our business. She is the mistress of the establishment, and always has a "chance" in every raffle. Lucky do the two individuals consider themselves, between whose shoulders that arm is inserted, for the purpose of rattling the dice. She is generally very lucky; but to-night she does not win. The prize is finally carried off by another.

Well, where next? The night wanes, and we have hardly begun to have our "fun" yet! One proposes the gambling-house; another, another place, which need not be more especially mentioned; a third, the dance-house. But the point is finally settled by Ingraham, in favour of the gambling-house, for which the dice have put him exactly in humour. So, down stairs again—another drink—and away up Chestnut street, to the well-known cage of "the Tiger."

Gambling may be considered a national vice in America, and Philadelphia has her full share of the practice. From the speculator in copper stock, roaming up and down the "coast," seeking whom he may devour, to the little niggers of St. Mary street, pitching pennies on the sidewalk for ground-nuts, a universal spirit of gambling pervades the city. Private

houses, among the middle class, are very frequently furnished with a card-room, where the members of the family, with some unfortunate young man whom they have "roped in" for the occasion, spend the night at "flip poker." In this employment perhaps one half our hard-working young men spend the hours that ought to be devoted to sleep,—and thus go forth to their daily occupations, weary, stupid, ill-natured, and totally unfitted for the active duties of life.

But our fast men are not bound on any such enterprise. Their goal is the veritable cage of "the Tiger," whose claws scratch wide and deep, and who, until scourged into darkness by the bold hand of the fearless magistrate—to whom be all praise and honour—was almost as public as the drinking-house, or the dry-goods shop. The tiger, however, is not at all an ostentatious animal. He cherishes his beautiful and fascinating black and red spots, and grows fat and sleek, in a plain, modest brick house. The door steps are of white marble—looking like all Philadelphia door-steps, as if they had been cut off from a whole piece of door-step, which sold at retail, at so much a yard.

They ring—and a well dressed mulatto, with the kinks of his hair redolent with cologne and attar of roses, opens the door, and politely inquires their business. Recognising "massa Ingraham," however, the party is ushered up stairs. In the front room is laid a superb supper, garnished with various kinds of wine and liquors, and continually replenished with wood

cock, quails, partridges, and other "delicacies of the season," which are served to every person as he seats himself at the table, without ceremony, or reference to others. Every thing, including wines and liquors—champagne, when called for—is free. The Tiger keeps open house, and practises a liberal hospitality—to his victims.

Of course, our friends are at home here. They take their seats at the table—take a drink all round to commence with, and then fall gravely to supper, as if they had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours. Then—hey for the back parlour! with the long table covered with black cloth, on which are painted the thirteen cards of a suit, and at one side of which, in the centre, sits a slim, pale, genteel-looking young man, with a thousand dollar diamond pin in his shirt, and a ruby ring as big as a bird's egg, on his little finger. In his hands he holds a silver music box—but the music it makes is very monotonous, and sometimes not very pleasant to a portion of the audience.

"Gentlemen, make your bets! Are you done? Seven—queen!" that is all that you hear, except, before every repetition of the tune, the rattling of some white and red buttons, distributed about on the various cards, and piled up in front of the players and at the right hand of the dealer.

This is the Tiger—here his inner cage, where the dainty animal takes his food!

Ingraham had no taste for gambling, and seldom indulged in it beyond a few checks, just enough, as

he said, to pay for his supper. As to his companions, they had already paid their respects to the Tiger too often. The affectionate creature had hugged them so closely that they had not a dollar in their pockets.

So—now to the dance-house! There is yet time, and the wood cock and champagne have put our heroes up to any thing. Down through the streets, past the squares, the elegant houses—till the streets grow dimmer and darker, the gas-lights are exchanged for feebly glimmering lamps, and there is a suspicious and brooding silence all round, that makes them start at the sound of their own footsteps.

The dance-house is the lowest form in which that universal passion for jumping up and down to music, so characteristic of human nature, has ever developed itself. In the orgy which goes on there, every conceivable base and degraded sentiment and appetite of man and woman is combined. On the part of the men, first stupified with poisoned liquor, they are lured to these places by the merest beastly, physical lust, which they are determined to gratify at any risk, or any expense. And the women, knowing this fact, play upon this horrible and depraved appetite, to lead their victims on, step by step, to drunken insensibility, and then to rob them. The keepers of these places of course share the spoil, and run the risk of the law. This is the whole philosophy of the dance-house.

It was at one of these establishments that our party now arrived. Going up a dark alley, they pushed open the back door, and at once found themselves in the

temple of Terpsichore. Seated on wooden benches, on either side of the room, were various couples, in attitudes which do not need to be particularly described. Some of the females were bright yellow, some brown, some white, and some jet black. They were shockingly indecently dressed, and were exerting all their fascinations upon the half drunken sailors, Californians, country green-horns, and what not, whom each held tightly with one arm round the neck, while with the other hand she fumbled at his pockets.

Here, too, Ingraham and his party seemed to be well known, as their entrance created no surprise, and they passed unmolested into the front room, where the old black fiddler had just struck up a lively quadrille. He was seated on a barrel, at the end of the rickety old counter, behind which stood a fat, blear-eyed, bloated old hag, dealing out the "stuff," at a fip a nip—besides a levy every round for the dance.

"How are ye, old mother Cockalorum!" shouted Ingraham, who was evidently quite as much at home here, as he had found himself in all the other haunts of the evening. "What's going on? Shall we join your party, eh?"

"Would the gentlemen take a turn on the flure?" inquired the old hag, pointing to the dancers. But there seemed nothing very attractive there. The "flure" was occupied by a dubious collection of rowdy "killers," drunken sailors, and loafers, generally, with women to match. Some of the young rowdies were the "beaux" of the ladies, and were, as usual, allowed

to "mix in" with the dancers, waiting for fresh victims to come and take their places. As fast as this happened, they obediently got out of the way, took a tremendous dram of poisoned whisky at the bar, and started out to get up a fight or a fire—only too happy if it should happen to be both.

The quadrille being now finished, a general stand up all round was proposed by Ingraham and his friends, who seized the girls and began to take their places. Some resistance, however, was shown by two or three of the ladies' former partners, which was speedily mollified by the landlady, who beckoned the malcontents to the counter, poured them out a glass apiece, and thus harmony was restored, while the gentlemen "had their little bit of a frolic just."

It was now long after midnight, and our fast men began to feel rather slow. Some complained of the "d——d bad brandy" that had made them sick at the stomach—another acknowledged to a terrible headache, and thought he must go home and have a good sleep; while another hiccupping the time to his own music; as the whole party emerged into the street, began singing that elegant and classical song, supposed to have been handed down from the feasts of Bacchus at Corinth, commencing—and ending—with,

"We won't go—*hic*—home till morn—*hic*—ing,
Till daylight doth ap—*hic*—pear!"

They thus reeled and staggered their way along, till seeing a gleam of light streaming out from a little

cellar in the neighbourhood of Musical Fund Hall, they literally tumbled down the narrow and slimy stairs—narrowly escaped being brought up again in a tub of oyster-shells, borne by a couple of naked-armed Germans—took a parting drink—and each went on his separate way rejoicing—promising to meet the next day at the old rendezvous, and have some more “fun of the same kind.”

There, reader—thank Heaven with me, that this chapter is over! It is altogether too true, too disgusting in its details—and too humiliating to human nature, to inspire either author or reader with anything but unmitigated horror. Yet, without it, you would have known nothing of our Philadelphia fast man—for amid these scenes is passed his outward and visible existence.

CHAPTER X.

THE HAREMS OF CIVILIZATION.

THE Wilmars, notwithstanding their industry, their economy and their devotion—which all the newspapers are cautiously repeating to us, as the sure means of prosperity and wealth—had a hard struggle. Although, through Arthur's success as a teacher, they managed to escape absolute want, yet many and severe were the privations to which they were exposed, and many the moments of discouragement and almost of despair. Their mother continued nearly in the same condition, apparently sinking from month to month, yet still living on miserably and hopelessly. She now required more attention and nursing than ever; and between the duties of housekeeping, and the attendance upon their mother, the time of the daughters was almost entirely consumed—so that they could add little or nothing to their brother's earnings. Besides, since the death of Mr. Wilmar, and the brutal abandonment of Edward Ingraham, Helen had never recovered her spirits or her health. Though she never complained, and was as gentle and kind-hearted as ever, yet she

paled day by day, and it was evident to her brother and sisters that the light of her life was gone. At first they naturally attributed the change in her manner and appearance to the moral suffering which they knew she had experienced in her wounded and crushed affections—and they hoped that time would sooth and restore her.

But the gentle and affectionate girl had a far deeper nature than they suspected. The blow she had received was a vital one, and attacked the very sources of life. Month after month wore on, and brought not back the light to her eye, or the bloom to her cheek. Day by day her strength wasted away, and her round elastic frame grew thin and emaciated. She was far more beautiful than her sisters, and had, from childhood, been their pet and darling—every caprice humoured, every fancy indulged; while she repaid their loving care with the joyous outpourings of her brilliant and susceptible nature. But now the music of her voice was gone—her eyes no more sparkled with gayety and animation—her step grew faint and languid—and she smiled feebly and sadly at the words of encouragement and hope which they offered her, and the attentions they lavished upon her.

Still, she was beautiful—perhaps even more beautiful than she had ever been in the full glow of health, and hope, and happiness. Her glance had a tender and almost divine light—her pale transparent cheek, over which the blood mantled in crimson shadows at the slightest emotions, spoke of ineffable depths of feeling

and passion—and her voice had acquired a low and thrilling power, that moved the soul of the listener to its inmost depths. The good doctor Felton, who continued the unremitting kindness of his attentions to the whole family, would often sit for a long time gazing anxiously upon that now spiritual face, as if striving to penetrate the secret of her ailing, and to discover the means of relief. Of course he knew that the engagement between Edward Ingraham and herself was broken off; and he frequently, at first, congratulated her, playfully, upon having so soon found out the worthlessness of her lover, and thus escaped a life of misery. But his practical experience of every day life and real physical suffering, prevented him from seeing or understanding that the strange phenomenon of a cureless inward sorrow and a broken heart, was daily enacting beneath his eyes. Physicians—even the best of them—come, in the course of their experiences among tangible ailments, to disbelieve in the incurable sufferings of the heart; and although he sympathized deeply with the slight and insult which poor Helen had endured, he never dreamed of attributing to that, the gradual yet certain undermining of her health, which now began seriously to alarm his friendly fears. Still she bore up resolutely; and to all the inquiries of the doctor and the family, she answered, with a smile, that she should soon be well—quite well.

They had no society. Quietly dropped by all their former acquaintances—ignored by the brilliant circle in which they had moved, as completely as though they

had never existed—they had neither time nor inclination to make new friends, or to form new associations. But, since Mr. Henderson's visit, announcing the loss of their fortune, that gentleman had frequently come to see them. At first it was natural and even necessary, in the discharge of his duties as their father's executor, that he should to some extent superintend their movements, and offer his counsel and guidance, in the new and thorny path upon which they were setting out. On these occasions, he seemed to display unwonted feeling, and to unbend from his usual coldness and severity. He even condescended to interest himself directly in their movements—sent Arthur to a house-agent with whom he was acquainted—and actually became security for the rent of the new and humble home, which was finally selected to receive the unhappy family. This—together with the extraordinary generosity he had displayed in appointing Arthur as the maestro of his daughter—formed the key-note of a perfect anthem of praises of his charity and benevolence, which was chanted throughout the houses of his sect, and commented upon, even by the profane world, as an incredible stretch of quaker generosity.

Oh, silly world! and ye, oh misjudging brethren of the *inner light*! do not the worthy and faithful disciple of George Fox and William Penn such gross injustice! He was still true to his principles; and if he came, oftener than it was necessary, to the humble home into which he had driven his hapless victims—if he sat sometimes late into the evening, on his way

from the store to his magnificent home, conversing in edifying language with the daughter of his dead friend—he had, as ever, a motive for all.

After what we have already disclosed of the inward nature and character of this man, we surely need not add that among his most actively developed virtues, was that of hypocrisy; and that beneath that withered and icy exterior, there dwelt a subdued volcano of passions—passions long subdued and forced under the most complete control, but which were not extinguished, and which might, at any hour, burst forth in streams of burning lava, whelming and destroying all around. Such an outbreak now threatened in the bosom of this man, so long disciplined to external peace and calm.

The strongest passion of man's nature is the love of women. In proportion as the innumerable instincts of the organization are repressed or smothered, they add their pent-up forces to this one absorbing passion, which cannot be controlled, and will have vent somewhere. Either instinct or study had taught Mr. Henderson this great physiological as well as metaphysical truth; and consequently, he had, early in life, made systematic arrangements for providing for this imperious law of his nature, and thus escaping the effects of the explosion which otherwise must one day happen.

Society, with all its grand pretensions, teaches thoroughly but one lesson to her subjects—duplicity. The sum of that “practical education,” so blindly

vaunted by all, is, not to purify the heart or the conduct,—but to *seem* to do so: to live, in short, a double life—one for society, and one for yourself and your own world of appetites and desires. All that the world requires, either in religion or morals, is conformity, not belief; propriety, not purity. Let a man pay his debts punctually, and he may obtain the money to do so by what devices of extortion, imposition or deception, he pleases—he will stand well with the world, and every one will endorse him, and give him an unimpeachable character—though they may *know* of his hard-heartedness, his extortion, his overreaching, his actual dishonesty. Let him fulfil all his conventional obligations—support his family, pay his rent, appear at church or theatre with his wife and daughters—dine at home at Sundays, and exchange merely the ordinary forms of civility with other women—and he will be quoted and pointed at as a model husband and father; though every man and woman of his acquaintance is aware that he keeps a mistress, or gambles like a black-leg, in secret. Whence proceeds this universal charity among men?—Simply from men's universal need of its exercise towards themselves. And the inflexible severity with which the world punishes and pursues those who overstep conventionality, and openly violate its forms—whence comes that? From the dread, lest, if they do not disown such a monster, attention will be awakened to themselves and their own conduct, and then the whole

miserable, cowardly lie, upon which society is conducted, laid bare.

There are two classes of men in society—those who learn and practise this great lesson, early, and those who never learn it, or disdain to practise it.

Whoever will carefully examine the creed and social theory of Mahomedanism, as developed and explained by Gibbon, that great “philosopher teaching by example,” will be startled at recognising, in that wonderful creed, the exact worldly antithesis of the pure doctrines of Christianity. Mahomet was the mock Christ, as civilization is the mock Christianity. Faticism, asceticism, skepticism, bigotry and hypocrisy, are the fundamental *principles* of Islamism—they are only the secret *practice* of civilization. And they who will peruse, with this key to its real meaning, that searching and sublime criticism on the unrecognised crimes of society—the *Revolt of Islam*—will no longer be at a loss to discover its real meanings, to understand its withering denunciations of the hypocrisy, selfishness and cruelty, the rapacity and licentiousness, of the world; nor will they be able to withhold their tenderest pity for the noble, child-like and innocent soul, immolated by that society whose inexorable creed it had outraged, but which was still pure and truthful to Heaven and nature, had died with dismay at the atrocious falsehoods by which it found itself surrounded.

Is it not among those concealed facts whose existence, known to all, is resolutely ignored by all, that

the legislatures and magistrates who pass such stringent laws against intemperance, licentiousness and gambling, are themselves licentious, gamblers and intemperate? Is not this every-day phenomenon the very counterpart of the life and character of the Mahometans? The Koran proscribes drunkenness as a mortal offence—yet the Mahometans, either through the open use of opium, or the secret indulgence of wine, are a nation of inebriates, who pass their lives in the fevered dreams and imbecile idiocy of intoxication. The Koran punishes fornication and adultery with death in this world, and eternal damnation in the world to come—yet Mahometanism openly permits polygamy, and the harem, which is a universal toleration of the coarsest and most disgusting prostitution, adultery, and licentiousness.

Civilization effects the same objects, and achieves the same end—but in all decency and propriety. The sanctimonious face, and the green veil of civilization, do for our men and women, what the Koran and exemption of the true believers, accomplish for the faithful followers of the Prophet.

Let us now join our worthy and most respectable acquaintance, Ira Henderson, the great merchant, the honest man, the representative of the highest power of society, and pay a visit to one of the harems of civilization.

He wears the same long, shapeless coat, assumed as the cloak of Jesuitism—which may be called quakerism in another form—the same immaculate white

neckcloth and sanctimonious face—in which we have heretofore beheld him. His pace is shambling and awkward, and his glance is meek and humble, as he encounters the sons and daughters of the “world’s people,” who pity him for his self-denial of all the amenities and enjoyments of life—and whom he in his turn despises, as children, who carry openly in their hands the sweet-meats which every hungry beggar may snatch from them.

On he goes, up the wide and well-washed walk of that smooth-faced, drab-coated and broad-brimmed avenue, which is the symbol, in brick and mortar, of those who built it, and who still inhabit it. The clumsy and ungraceful forms of the buildings—the ostentatious ugliness of the door-steps and porticoes—the shambling, wooden window-shutters—are but the shapeless coats and trowsers, the protruding, eave-like hats, and the studiously uncouth gait of their owners.

But, before he has proceeded far up this wide thoroughfare, our respectable merchant takes a little street to the right, and again turning into another, that runs parallel with the great one he has left, he cautiously pursues his way.

The very route he has chosen, is indicative of his present purpose—which is also one of those foul and narrow private ways that run parallel to the good man’s public walk and conversation. Ah, these by-ways and obscure alleys of our moral and Christian cities! To those who know where they lead, and who walk in them, they are full of meaning.

The good man at length stops at a modest little

house, whose lower shutters are closed, whose door-step gleams with cleanliness, whose narrow bit of side-walk has been scrubbed and scoured down to its red and raw integuments. He takes a bright little yellow latch key from an inside pocket, and enters. It is very indiscreet, we know—very improper—thus to violate the impenetrable veil of the harem; but we, too, have our disguise—and we must enter with him.

He does not stop to look in at the little parlour, now so carefully darkened by the closed shutters; but takes his way up stairs, and knocks at the door of the front chamber.

“Come in.”

A woman is seated in a comfortable arm chair, engaged in sewing. She lays down her work, rises, and respectfully brings forward another chair for her guest. She has evidently been expecting him.

“How is my friend to-day? I hope he is well,” she says, in a low deferential tone.

“Well, I thank thee, sister Catherine; very well. And how does thee prosper? Has thee thought of the matter I spoke to thee of when I saw thee last? Has thee composed any dainty female device, such as will advance our purpose?”

“Yes. I must myself visit the young lady. I am a lone widow, who engages in works of charity, and has need of assistance in sewing, and preparing suitable garments for the children of the poor families under my charge. I have heard, through a friend, of the family of Wilmar—how industrious and good they are—how they strive to take care of their poor sick mo-

ther; and I can put some light and profitable employment in the way of the daughters. If the young lady will come to my house, I will provide her with the work, and give her the necessary instructions."

"Good!"

"You see I have always ready the necessary habiliments for my visit. Does the plan please you?" and she pointed, with a smile, to her slate-coloured, straight-skirted dress, to a narrow white muslin shawl that covered her shoulders, and to a bonnet of the same colour as her dress, lying on the bed.

"It is admirable, Catherine—it could not be better. When will thee make thy essay?"

"To-day, if it please you. I have always time to attend to the wishes of my kind patron."

"Thee is an excellent woman, Catherine, and I do believe, a faithful—especially, as I make it always to thine own interest to serve me well and truly. When, think thee, that I may expect to meet the beautiful Helen beneath thy friendly roof?"

"This night, I think and hope. I shall request her to be punctual. But should I not succeed, I will pass through the store, as if to make some purchases, at four o'clock. If you do not see me at that time, you may suppose that I have succeeded in decoying the young girl to my house."

"It is well. Does thee need anything to-day?"

"No—I have money enough for the present."

"When thee needs, speak frankly. I have ever found thee reasonable."

"And faithful to your interests, as I have promised."

"Does thee sometimes, Catherine, regret our contract?"

"Perhaps: but I never wish to break it. I have chosen my way of life. The past has no pleasant memories—the future no hopes. I am contented to remain that which I am—that which you have made me."

"Thee is a most sensible woman, Catherine—most sensible. The proud dames of the world are no better than thee—their lives are not so peaceful. I will return to-night: and I must now go to take the necessary precautions, that my absence may be accounted for."

The woman rose, and attended her visiter to the door, and would have even gone with him down stairs—but he motioned her back; and going down softly, passed out of the house, took his way directly to Arch street, and so returned to his counting-house.

In a few minutes after he had entered, a clerk came in to the private office where he was usually seated, during business hours, and handed him a telegraphic despatch. He opened it, glanced over its contents, and handed it back.

"File away the despatch among thy daily memorandums, friend John," said he; "and presently bring me a duplicate of the account of our correspondent, Ellis Harmer, at Trenton. I must proceed thither to-night, as thee sees by the despatch, to settle that long outstanding matter. I shall return to-morrow."

Meanwhile, sister Catherine, as she had been designated by her visiter, put on her bonnet, wrapped a plain drab-coloured shawl about her shoulders, smoothed her hair over her temples, and prepared to set out on her expedition. As she went down stairs, a young girl, of apparently sixteen, leaned over the balustrade of the room above, and spoke to her.

"Good morning, Mrs. Anthony," said the lovely face, in a sweet voice, and with a slight accent, which the practised ear would have recognised immediately as belonging only to French lips. "Are you going out so early? Can I not go with you?"

"No, my child, not to-day: I am going to make some charitable calls, and shall come back to dinner."

"Well, then," replied the voice, in a pretty, childish tone of disappointment; "will you take this note for Edward to the despatch post? I have not seen him for two whole days. I fear he is ill." And running lightly down stairs, she put her little note into Mrs. Anthony's hands.

It was directed to "Edward Brown, Esquire, Blood's Despatch. To be called for."

"Don't forget, my dear Mrs. Anthony," said the girl. "Edward assures me that he goes or sends every day to the despatch office; and I want to see him very much. It is so lonely without him!"

"I shall be sure not to forget, my dear Rosalie," said Mrs. Anthony, looking at the note, and putting it in her pocket. "Do I ever forget anything you want?"

“Oh, never, never!” cried the girl; “you are always kind. But I *do* want to see Edward so much! If he does not come this evening, I shall be very, very unhappy.”

“Good morning, my dear—don’t mope and make yourself ill. You must look your best, you know, when Edward comes.”

Rosalie, blushing, returned to her room, and Mrs. Anthony went out to execute her mission of charity.

Her visit to the Wilmars was well timed. After paying their quarter’s rent, which had just fallen due, and settling the little bill at the grocer’s, they found themselves literally at the end of their resources. Two or three of Arthur’s wealthy patrons, whose quarter’s bills for teaching were now some time overdue, had still forgotten or neglected to make payment—and Arthur could not bring himself to speak of the subject. Oh, if the rich knew how much actual suffering to the poor whom they employ, they might alleviate, by *promptly* paying them their pittance, when it was earned, I am sure they would not be so inconsiderate and thoughtless as they too often are. Surrounded by every comfort, every luxury, and never feeling the want of money, they are far from understanding the imperious need of every dollar which the poor man earns. He lives from day to day—he has no credit, beyond the quick-coming Saturday-night, with the grocer, the butcher, the baker and the milkman. He must pay as he goes, or he and his family must go destitute. Hundreds of families pass a cold

and hungry Sabbath from the neglect of their rich employers to pay them what they have toiled early and late, through the dismal week, to earn. Many a poor, pale, emaciated seamstress, after working all night to complete her task, on the payment of which she depends for present fire, food and light, turns away despairing and heart-broken from her wealthy employer's door, at the cruel phrase, "Call again in a few days—I have no money now!" And while she returns disconsolately to her miserable home, knowing not where to get the bread for her children, or fire to warm their feeble frames, the rich lady who "has no money now," steps into her carriage, or promenades the fashionable walk, stopping at every shop, and spending for useless luxuries, enough to have gladdened the heart and hearth of her poor seamstress for a twelvemonth. Ye rich and prosperous, remember this; and at least observe toward your poor and humble creditors that punctuality which all so rigidly exact from them!

It was the day of the *matinée musicale*. Arthur had been up nearly the whole night practising the solos he was going to play at the concert—conscious how important it was for him to make a favorable impression upon the brilliant audience who were to listen to him—and stimulated, too, by *another* motive, which the young reader will divine, and which it is not at all necessary that the old ones should understand. Still, it was with an anxious brow, and a heavy heart, that he had gone forth in the morning, to give

his usual lessons. They were literally reduced to their last resources. The breakfast had been a scanty one, and the dinner promised to be still more meager, unless some of his patrons should happily remember to discharge their debt to him, and thus replenish the exhausted family treasury. No such good fortune happened—as it never does happen at the time it is most needed. Sad and disheartened, he left the door of his last pupil, and at length resolved to call upon Mr. Henderson—who was among his list of delinquent patrons—and ask him for a small supply of money for his immediate wants. He went to the store, and, on inquiring for Mr. Henderson, was told that, being obliged to leave town that evening on important business, he could see no one till the next day. It was in vain that he insisted—the clerk, who was civil enough, said his orders not to interrupt Mr. Henderson, were positive, and even declined to send in Wilmar's name. With a pang so keen, that nothing but poverty has a right to inflict it, he turned away, and slowly walked homewards.

To go through the crowded streets, full of people walking briskly, and with smiling countenances—for to the desperate, every face he meets seems to speak of success and satisfaction, and to mock him with its gayety—and to feel that there is at home not even the means of providing another meal—that the loved ones are actually in want of bread, and that they will try to meet him with cheerful faces, while hunger is gnawing them, and they are faint from want—this is po-

verty. And yet, how many thousands in this beautiful world, thus daily walk slowly and tottering to their homes!

At last, he came to his humble door. He had no more excuses for waiting—he must enter. The hour for the concert was hastening on; and he must go from this wretched home to keep his appointment with the gay and joyous world of luxury and revelry. He must hide the anguish in his heart, and call up the inspirations of art and poetry, to inform his fingers, and enable him to minister worthily to the pampered tastes, the thoughtless criticisms of the brilliant crowd. He felt as if he must sink beneath the trial.

But he found a ray of comfort when he entered. A plentiful dinner was laid, and his sister Emma met him with an encouraging smile.

“How have you done this, dear sister?” said he, in surprise. “I did not leave you even a shilling, this morning. I have brought nothing. Have you been running into debt?”

“Oh, no, dear brother—here is money left, you see. A kind quaker lady—the president of friends’ charitable society—came to see us, and has taken Helen away with her. She is going to superintend some needle-work at the lady’s house, and will hereafter get five dollars every week for her services. The lady insisted upon paying a week’s wages in advance, and upon Helen going with her immediately. She said she had been sent by a friend, whose name she did not tell, as she said the friends always did

their charities in secret, never letting the left hand know what the right is doing. But I think it was Dr. Felton who told her about us. I feared poor Helen's health, and would have gone in her place. But Helen was sure that the employment would do her good—and the lady was of the same opinion: and so she went. She is to be sent home this evening in the lady's carriage."

Relieved of a heavy load of care, Arthur did not stop to discuss the prudence of letting Helen go out alone with a stranger. Had he done so, he could have scarcely objected to intrusting her to a respectable quaker lady, who had been so kindly considerate, and who, besides, was the president of a charitable society! So, hastily dining, he paid his customary visit to his mother, and prepared himself for the concert. Sitting down at his piano for a moment, to try over his capriccio, founded upon Madame Pleyel's *nocturne*, which he had improvised under the inspiration of Madame de Saintlieu's eyes, and since written out and committed to memory, he found that power and expression had come back to his weary fingers. Then, kissing Emma and Kate, he set out for Mrs. Valentine's,—his heart beating with tumultuous emotions, which he doubtless would have attributed wholly to his artist anxieties, but which we sagely suspect were largely combined with other half-formed feelings and emotions, that, vague and undefined as they were, had already acquired the mastery of his heart.

CHAPTER XI.

TEMPTATION AND TRIAL.

HELEN and her new friend proceeded directly to the lady's house, the modest appearance of which struck the young girl as somewhat different, both in style and location, from what she had expected. She bestowed no particular thought upon the subject, however, and followed her companion into the house, without making any observation.

Going directly up stairs, Mrs. Anthony led the way to the third story, and entered the room adjoining Rosalie's, and communicating with it by a glazed door—the glass of which, however, being either ground or painted white, prevented all observation through it. There was, besides, a sofa against the door, showing that it was not in use.

The table and bed were spread out with pieces of calico and muslin, trimmings, thread, and all the et-ceteras of feminine handicraft; and, seating her guest on the little sofa, she placed herself beside her, and began saying:

“Now, my dear young lady, thee sees thy workshop.

Here is, in abundance, every thing thee requires. I should be glad if thee would fall to work immediately, and cut out a dozen little frocks, of the size and pattern thee will find there. We have several young ladies who are ready to assist in the sewing, but they have not the skill to cut and fashion the garments to the best advantage. I have some other errands to do, this afternoon, and will send thee directly a cup of tea, and some lunch. Meanwhile, fall to work, my dear young lady, and God speed thee !”

The unsuspecting girl, happy at having found employment so suitable to her wishes, and by which she was to be enabled to assist materially in the expenses of their home, threw off her bonnet and shawl, and went to work with alacrity. She did not, however, hear the key turned softly in the lock, as her hostess went out—or she would not have gone on so cheerfully with her new employment.

Hour after hour went by; and, just as it was becoming dark, Mrs. Anthony reappeared with a tray, upon which a nice warm dinner was spread. She excused herself for having kept her so long without her dinner—saying that her errands had taken more time than she had expected, and that she wished to see for herself that she was well served.

“Here are the dozen little frocks, madam, all ready. That heap there on the bed is the skirts, and here are the waists. Besides, you see that I have cut out another for myself, and have almost finished it.” And she held up her work before her hostess.

"Thee is indeed a treasure!" exclaimed the good lady, "we shall get the full value of our money from thy labour, my pretty one! I feel as if I had not offered thee enough."

"Oh, yes—I am very well content, and will do my best to please you," replied the gratified Helen.

"But I think it is time for me to go home. I will not trouble you to call your carriage, madam—I can very well run home by myself."

"Thee need not be in a hurry. I have promised thy sister to take good care of thee, and send thee home in safety; and I must keep my word to the letter. Besides, it is not good for beautiful young girls, like thee, to walk in the streets alone, after night-fall."

"But they will be uneasy, madam. I did not expect to stay so long away: and brother Arthur will soon come home now; and I think, if you please, I will go at once."

"Very good—it shall be as thee pleases. Eat some dinner—for I am sure, after working so steadily, thee must be very hungry. I will go down stairs and send for the carriage."

Helen, who really was hungry and fatigued—having seldom worked for so long a time together—sat down and ate her dinner, cheerfully.

But after some time she began to get impatient, and very much wondered where her friend Mrs. Anthony could be. At last she got up and walked to the window. It was quite dark, and she began to feel a vague

and nameless terror. She looked around for the bell, determined to ring—but she looked in vain. Then, her heart beginning to beat with something like real alarm, she decided, at all hazards, to go down stairs, and, if she could not find Mrs. Anthony, to go home alone, and in the dark. Anything was better than staying any longer where she was.

She went to the door, and found that it was locked!

Then, indeed, she began to fear in earnest! Where was she? Into what trap had she been inveigled? Who was Mrs. Anthony? Why was she thus a prisoner?

She listened—all was still as night. Was the door really fastened? Had not her fears deceived her? She would try again. No—there was no mistake—the door was indeed locked from the outside. She tried the glazed door behind the sofa—that, too, was fastened. Should she scream? She ran to the windows, first to one, then to the other. They were both so firmly fastened, that she endeavoured in vain to raise them. She went to the door again, and beat against it till her strength failed her—she called—she screamed—until, at length, overcome by terror, and the violence of her exertions, she fainted, and fell on the floor.

How long she lay in this state, she had no means of knowing. When her consciousness first returned, she opened her eyes, and saw a man bending over her, with a lamp in his hand.

Starting up, and pressing her hands to her eyes, as

if to dispel a vision, she withdrew them, and looked again. There could be no deception this time: she saw standing before her, the quaker, Ira Henderson!

The first sensation was one of joy.

"Oh, Mr. Henderson!" she exclaimed, springing towards him; "I am so glad to see you!—How did you come here? There has been some terrible mistake. I"——

But, although it was, indeed, Ira Henderson, yet he was very different from the Ira Henderson she had known. His manner, his looks, his whole aspect, was completely changed. Instead of his usual cold and chalky countenance, and his impassive manner, his face now beamed with a strange smile, his eyes flashed, and he opened his arms to receive her.

"Come hither, poor frightened child!" he said, soothingly; "who has hurt thee?—what is the matter? Come, tell thy friend, he will protect thee from all harm."

But she recoiled from him, and returned to the other side of the room, in fear and amazement. A maiden's instinct is the true touchstone—it feels the approach of impurity, as sensitively as the opal of the Giersteins did water.

"Tell me where I am, sir—and why you came here? And, oh, Mr. Henderson—I implore you, take me back to my sisters! I have a dreadful suspicion that I have been decoyed here—that some wrong is intended me. I conjure you to take me from this place

—let me but into the street, and I will find my way home, though it should be midnight.”

“Be patient, my poor frightened little bird; I would hold some converse with thee. Come near me, and sit down beside me. I am not a wild animal to rend thy beautiful form,” he continued, as he advanced towards her, his eyes sparkling and gloating over her delicate figure, as if he really were an animal, who would devour her on the spot.

But all the woman, alarmed for her honour, was now aroused within her. She saw at a glance the infamous trick that had been practised upon her; and, if she still had entertained any doubt that the quaker was a party to the transaction, his looks and gestures, as he came towards her, would have confirmed her worst fears. Suddenly springing by him, on the other side of the table, which stood between them, she rushed to the door, and was darting through it, when she was caught by one arm and dragged back into the chamber, struggling in the arms of Henderson, who strained her fiercely and passionately to his breast; then, as if he suddenly recollected that he was going too fast to his purpose, he set her down, and uttered a profound sigh. He now, however, took care to secure the door—locking it on the inside, and putting the key in the inner pocket of his waist-coat. •

She was furious. Her nostrils dilated—her face flushed scarlet with shame and anger at the unholy contact of his person—her eye flashed fire.

“Wretched old man!” she exclaimed. “What do

you mean? How dare you touch me? Let me go from this vile place, instantly—this very moment! I promise you faithfully that if you will do so, I will never breathe to mortal that I have seen you here. If you don't, I will proclaim your villany to the whole world."

"Let thee and me argue that question a little, beautiful damsel! I swear by the profane boy Cupid, that never before did thee appear to me half so ravishing! Oh, maiden! If thee but knew how I love thee! Listen to me—nay, if thee will, I will not come nearer thee than I now am. Sit thee down on that side of the table—I will remain on this. There—so thee is quite safe, thee sees. Let me talk with thee—let me reason the case with thy better judgment."

She sank into a chair—indeed, she could no longer stand. The paroxysm that gave her supernatural strength, had passed away; she trembled in every limb, and would have fallen, had she attempted to take a single step. She felt that she needed time to regain at least some portion of her strength, and sat looking at him steadfastly in the eyes.

"Nay, do not look at me like *that*," said the quaker, while a shudder of passion ran through his frame; "do not look like that, or I shall surely forget myself!"

She blushed at what his words implied, and her eyes sunk in shame and mortification.

"Now mark me, fair maiden!" at length said Henderson, speaking with a voice still stifled with passion.

"I have much to say to thee. But, first, I love thee, and would do thee no evil, but rather good."

"Monster!" she exclaimed, shuddering, in her turn—but with womanly disgust.

"Call me no names!" exclaimed Henderson, his face flushing purple; "it will be the worse for thee. But listen calmly to what I have to say, and thee will have no reason to complain of Ira Henderson the quaker."

He paused; wiped the perspiration from his forehead; and, restraining himself by a violent effort, withdrew his devouring gaze from the fair, trembling girl, and then resumed.

"I love thee, maiden; my soul is sick for thee—thee must be mine! Nay, start not! Men like me do not give way to a temptation, and then consent to lose it. I have struggled in vain with the desire that consumes me. I do verily believe, maiden, that my life depends on possessing those exquisite charms. Thee has hitherto deemed me the puritan, the ascetic—dead to all human feelings and passions. But know me now, for what I am—the adorer of thy sex, and most of all of thee. Thy beauties have inflamed my very soul. They are ever present before me. At midnight I dream of thee, and start from slumber striving to clasp thee. Bethink thee, whether, after making this confession, I am likely to give thee up! No—no—a thousand times! Thee must and shall be mine!"

At the fierce tone of his voice, not less than at the words themselves, Helen recoiled in horror.

“Nay—I mean thee fairly; I mean thee fairly. See—I hold in my hands the power to restore thy father’s fortune to thee and thy family—all—all—to the last dollar: it needs but a word from thee, and it is done! Think of that! Think of thy poor mother—thy sisters slaving and dragging their lives out in their squalid kitchen! Think of thy brother’s career—of thy former splendid and luxurious life! All can be, and shall be, returned to thee—I will swear it by any profane oath thee may dictate—restored to thee and thine in a single day. And only a word from thee, beautiful, bewitching maiden! Thee consents! I see thee does! It would be a crime against thy brothers and sisters to refuse!”

“Do you speak of crime?” replied Helen, who had now regained her self-possession, and had nerved herself for the terrible emergency in which she was placed. “Do you speak of crime? You, who are trying to tempt me to become infamous before God and man—a scorn and a by-word to my brother and my sisters! Is it possible that mankind contains such monsters of perfidy and villany? Begone—or let me go on the instant!”

There was so much of grandeur and majesty in the attitude, voice, and gesture of the young girl, as she rose and pointed upwards, as if appealing to Heaven to send down its justice upon the guilty being before her, that for a moment Henderson shrank from her

looks, and his resolution seemed to fail him. She saw the effect she had produced, and went on:—

“I again promise you that I will spare you from all exposure, if you will instantly set me free. I will account to my family as best I may, for this absence—never shall your name, in connexion with this transaction, cross my lips. But beware, old man! If you keep me here—if you dare further to insult me—I will proclaim you the villain you are, and my brother will know how to punish you for this atrocious outrage. I warn you to think well on how you decide. I am a woman, and alone—weak and helpless, as you deem me, and doubtless beyond the reach of other aid than God’s: but I am still stronger than you—God will give me strength. I fear you not—I only loathe and detest you.”

“Thee is magnificent, fair Helen—thee would tempt a saint to forego paradise! But thee is but a bad logician, girl! Does thee not know that, in order to proclaim to the world all those fine things thee has threatened, thee must go *into* the world—it cannot hear thee utter a syllable from where thee is at this moment! And, as I said to thee, I am not a man to be balked in his caprice—and especially such a dainty caprice as thee! I would risk losing my life sooner than give thee up. Thee can never depart from this chamber but as mine. And yet, if thee consent, every good shall attend thee. Thy fortune shall be restored—thy secret kept from thy family, and from all the world—and we will meet here, only here, in precious communion. Sees thee not how easy—how proper—

how convenient—how in every way advantageous—it is? Reflect! Let thy woman's wit and common sense decide."

"Leave me, sir—at least for awhile," said Helen, at length, letting Henderson suppose, from the altered tone of her voice, that she was at least willing to think seriously of his proposals. "It is true," she continued, "that I am in your power; yet it seems to me like a dream. It is incredible that Ira Henderson—my father's friend, whom he trusted as he would have trusted a brother—can be guilty of this outrage upon his daughter. I cannot believe it!"

"Do not deceive thyself on that point, lovely Helen! The time for hypocrisy is over; what I have told thee, is the veritable truth—the alternative I have placed before thee is the only one from which thee has power to choose. And that thee may have time to think freely and decide wisely, I will withdraw for a brief time. It is now past midnight: at the third hour, I will revisit thee—by that time, thy decision must be made. Remember; I offer thee fairly, maiden, and mean thee well—but if thee continues obstinate, the worse will befall thee. Thou canst not, and shalt not escape me!" and the intenseness of his feeling actually made him forget the conventional jargon of his life and sect, and for once resort to grammatical language.

He rose from his seat—gazed for a moment at the beautiful girl, with a stern and unpitying glance, and then slowly left the room, carefully locking the door as he went out.

CHAPTER XII.

ROSALIE.

SOME years before the commencement of this history, a little girl sat by the side of her dying mother, in the steerage of an emigrant ship, on the Atlantic. She was too young to understand what death was—but she felt that some great sorrow was about to come upon her. She had never had any other friend than her mother; and when she was gone, the little girl would be all alone in the world, with no one to take care of her, or even to speak to her—all alone on the waters, with not one face she had ever seen, in the country where she was going. She could not reason upon the consequences of this—but she had a highly-endowed and sensitive nature; and the instincts of the child seemed dimly to reflect her destiny. She was not more than six or seven years old, and yet she did not look like a child. Her face was pensive and thoughtful; and her large gray-blue eyes were filled with tears that did not overflow, as she watched her mother's pale and suffering face—such tears as are pressed by despair from the heart ripened by years and suffering. The exquisite beauty of her infantile head, the unstained

lustre of the silken hair, the babyish grace of her attitude, contrasted strangely with the intense expression of her face, and her steady, prophetic look, piercing futurity. The seal of suffering was already imprinted on this child, marking her as of a nature too high and noble for aught but sorrow.

The mother had been seemingly asleep; but her voice suddenly recalled the child from her reverie.

"Rosalie, do you love me?" said her mother, in a faint, trembling voice.

The child did not answer; but the tears that had been brimming in her eyes, gushed over, and she rose and threw herself upon her mother's neck—yet tenderly and carefully, as if she remembered how weak and fragile she was. Then, creeping her little fingers among the dark masses of her mother's hair, the full heart began sobbing.

"Mamma!" at length whispered the child.

"Rosalie, is it you? Where am I? Oh, I remember all again."

"Here, darling, take your mother's portrait and hang it about your neck—let it always rest upon your heart. It is all I have to leave you—may it prove a talisman, to save you from a fate like mine! Perhaps God's mercy will, at some future day, restore you to our dear France, and the friends I have lost forever. My child! my child! May God protect you!"

Then she suddenly started up, strained her child wildly to her bosom, kissed her eyes, her cheeks, her hair; then, holding her from her, and gazing with in-

effable tenderness upon her. "I am going," she cried, "kiss me—embrace me! Closer, closer, Rosalie dear! I feel you not—I see you not! And now you are as cold as a dead baby upon my bosom! Farewell, and remember!"

The mother was dead, and the child lay senseless in her stony arms.

During this scene, several of the female passengers had gathered round the mother and child, who had been objects of especial interest, during the whole voyage, to their rough but kind-hearted fellow passengers. They had come on board the vessel, at Liverpool, by themselves—nobody attended them or looked after them—and they did not, like the rest of the passengers, look back with regrets at the land they were leaving. They were evidently neither Irish nor English—probably French—for the few words they exchanged with each other, were in a language which none of the other passengers understood.

But suffering is of all countries. The mother was evidently feeble, and for the first few days had suffered terribly from sea-sickness. After she recovered from that, she seemed to be very weak, and could scarcely stand. Finally, she took to her bunk, from which she never rose again.

Among the passengers in the steerage, was an Irish woman, of a better condition than those who generally cram the steerage of our emigrant vessels. She had resided in the United States some years, and was a well-to-do widow, keeping a little corner grocery in

Philadelphia. Having received news from Ireland of the death of her mother, and a small patrimony that thus fell to her, she had gladly taken the opportunity of seeing her native home once more, and had gone to settle the affair in person—leaving her grocery in charge of a friendly and honest gossip from her own county in the Emerald Isle. She was now on her return home; and had, from the first, taken a special interest in the poor “forrin craythur,” and her pretty and interesting daughter.

Rosalie began now to move; and Mrs. O'Donnell went up and took her in her arms, and carrying her to the other side of the cabin, came back, gazed for a moment on the face of the dead, and then reverently covered it with the blanket, that had served for both sheet and coverlet—muttering a few words in a low tone, and crossing herself.

Rosalie now returned towards her mother, but the woman took her by the hand to lead her away, saying, “’Tis no place for yees, darlint—come away, come away!”

But the child struggled fiercely, and breaking away by a sudden movement, ran to the bunk, crying piteously.

“Mamau! mamau! Je ne veux pas te laisser! Je ne veux pas!”

She pulled the blanket away, and was struck motionless by the sight of the face. The eternal sculptor, who moulds his marble statues from the warm and living flesh and blood, had done his work. Rigidly

the jaw fell on the bosom—fixed the stony eyes glared with the livid light of death. The young soul comprehended all, and looked calmly at the image of what was her mother. Then, tenderly and carefully, she closed the cold eyes with her soft warm fingers, drew the blanket again over the face, and knelt down by the bunk, turning towards her visiter, with a gesture and look, which said, in a language not to be mistaken, “Let me watch here!”

So commenced the life of Rosalie—alone, fatherless, motherless,—an infant, whose very childish prattle was not understood by any around her—friendless, and with none but God to care for her or watch over her tender years. What a destiny! what an illustration of life and its terrible struggle! How should she go on? How escape starvation now, or crime and infamy hereafter?

Did she ask herself these questions? Had her quick-dawning mind already taken in the meanings of her situation, and did the latent energies of her soul already begin to move and develop themselves in the inmost recesses of her being? We know not. But none who have not watched, as we have done, the activity of thought and reason in the mind of a child, can rightly conjecture how quick and susceptible that mind may become, under the stimulus of unusual circumstances—how prematurely the faculties of reason and self-reliance may be developed—nor how firmly and strongly the will of infancy may be moulded. Children are almost always misunderstood by men and women,

who treat them with a contemptuous indifference, which the child returns with bitterness and disdain. It has often seemed to me that, in all but absolute material experience, the child is intellectually the equal of man. Who does not recall, in the still and silent hours of busy life, the vivid dreams and searching speculations, the reasonings, the doubts, the conclusions, of childhood—and is not sometimes startled to find that the infant instinct had intuitively embraced decisions and opinions, which, rejected in the pride of vain-glorious youth, came back to be confirmed by the sadder and truer experience of middle age? There are moments when life's perspective is reversed, and the rising sunlight of infancy appears broader and brighter and more celestial than the narrow and clouded rays of mid-day. Indeed, are not the first and last hours of earthly existence those which connect us most nearly with the immortal world?—whence sent out wailing and helpless, to a dark and uncertain pilgrimage, moaning and helpless the weary spirit joyfully returns!

It is not my purpose to follow further the incidents of this voyage. The sad and desolating event to poor Rosalie, which we have already recorded, was necessary to be recalled, in order for the comprehension of the early life of Rosalie, and the proper comprehension of our story.

It was with the greatest difficulty that the child could be removed from the corpse of her mother; and when they came to take it away, and consign it to the waves, she became frantic, and, but for the perse-

vering kindness of Mrs. O'Donnell, would have killed herself in despair.

Mrs. O'Donnell, as we have said, was a widow, and she had no children. She had already made up her mind to adopt little Rosalie.

Under the gentle treatment of the good widow, poor Rosalie soon grew calm; and before the voyage was concluded, she had become quite reconciled to her new protector, called her mamma, and had already learned a strange sort of dialect, composed of French and Irish, and which gave the widow huge delight.

As soon as they got on shore, Mrs. O'Donnell hastened to Philadelphia, with her new-found protégé, and gladly re-established herself in her own little store and home.

She took almost a mother's fancy for the pretty little orphan, and watched her, day by day, as she grew up in beauty and gentleness. Rosalie was remarkably quick and intelligent; and Mrs. O'Donnell sent her to school, for several seasons, until she had acquired at least the outlines, if not the rudiments, of an education.

When Rosalie was fifteen, Mrs. O'Donnell placed her in a little fancy dry-goods shop, where she soon became, from her activity and good nature, a great favourite with the public, as well as with her employers.

When Rosalie was a little over sixteen, Mrs. O'Donnell died—leaving her a handsome legacy, amounting to about a thousand dollars, after the affairs of the

shop were closed up, and everything paid off. This sum she deposited in the savings bank, and, deeply mourning the loss of her benefactor and only friend, continued in her situation—occupying her spare time in reading, and doing what she could to extend her education, and gratify her ardent taste for knowledge and refinement.

Of course, so beautiful a girl, thus daily exposed to the gaze of the public, did not escape the attention of numerous of the “fast young men” about town—one of whose principal employments consists in watching the shop windows, and spying out every new face that makes its appearance behind the counter. These shop-girls are considered fair game by the sons of our aristocratic families; and it is notorious that many of them are deliberately selected and hunted down by them.

Among the many who had in vain endeavoured to attract the attention of Rosalie, at length appeared a young man, who was destined to exert a controlling influence over her fate. This was Edward Ingraham. For a long time he watched her daily, without accosting her. But at length the opportunity occurred—and the mischief was done. One evening she was on her way with a parcel, for a lady in the upper part of Chestnut street. She did not usually carry parcels; but the boy had gone and neglected this one, which had been particularly promised to be left that evening. So, seeing that there was no one else to do

it, she offered to take it, as there was still plenty of time for her to return before dark.

Ingraham had been watching about the shop for some time, during the afternoon; and as soon as he saw her come out, he followed her. Shortly overtaking her, he said, very politely,—

“It seems to me strange, miss, that you should allow yourself to be made an errand-boy of.”

Rosalie looked up at the handsome and open face of the young gentleman—which, sooth to say, she had often seen and involuntarily admired; and, instead of hurrying on without replying, as she had at first intended to do, some irresistible spirit of mischief impelled her to say,

“Oh, I’m not an errand-boy, I’m an errand-*girl*, if you please, sir!”

“Why, so you are!” said Ingraham, laughing; “and the prettiest one, too, that ever carried a parcel. But come—now that I have at last got to speak with you, which I have been trying to accomplish for a long time, let me make the best use of my time. I am a young man with plenty of money, and I admire you beyond anything. I wish, seriously, to become acquainted with you; and if you should happen to find me agreeable, I mean to marry you. I have nobody to consult, and nobody that can cross my wishes. My meaning is really honourable; and if you will give me an opportunity of making your acquaintance, I’ll convince you of it.”

Such was Rosalie’s first declaration—her first offer.

Poor girl! If she had known, as well as *we* know, reader, the real value and meaning of such words, uttered under such circumstances, she would have waited not another instant, but would have ran away as fast as she could—or, if that had not answered, she would have called the police, or the passengers on the walk, to her assistance, to rescue her from the impending destruction.

But, alas! Rosalie did none of these things. She had already learned to admire the handsome face and form of this young man; and when, instead of accosting her rudely, or insulting her with some infamous proposal, he spoke to her so softly and so gently, commencing by declaring his wish to make her his wife, she did not know what to say, or what to do. And so she quickened her pace, turned away her head, and remained silent.

“Then you positively will have nothing to say to me? I have been too bold—I have offended you! Well, then, I can only declare, upon my honour, that such was not my intention—and that I most sincerely beg your pardon. Farewell!” Saying this, Ingraham left her side, and fell behind.

So he was gone! She was glad of it—yes, very glad. For what business had a gentleman—even though he was handsome, and spoke so softly—to accost a modest girl like her in the street; and to make her an offer of marriage almost in the first breath? Yes—she was *very* glad he was gone!

And yet—oh, Eve, and Mrs. Lot, and all the other

women that ever lived!—"oh, sin, oh, sorrow, and oh, womankind!"—our very fingers tingle with blushes as we record the fact!—Rosalie looked round! It was only a little—just the very least glance in the world! But the angler's watchful eye saw that his bait had been swallowed, and was sure of bringing the bright and beautiful little flutterer to shore, in good time.

He was at her side again in an instant,—“Will you not,” said he, even in softer and more insinuating tones than before; “will you not, at least, tell me your name, and who your friends are, that I may, if possible, make their acquaintance, and thus present myself to you in a less offensive manner? Surely, you cannot deny me this?”

“My name is Rosalie,” murmured the girl, “and I have no friends—they are all dead!”

“Let me, then, dear Rosalie, supply the place of all other friends. I swear that I do not mean to wrong you. Will you not see me again? This evening, after you have finished your day's occupation? Meet me here, and we will walk in the moonlight, while I explain myself more fully to you.” Thus saying, he made a respectful bow, and disappeared. He knew that not another word was necessary; the fish was caught.

We need not say that after much beating of the heart, much self-discussion, and a little crying, Rosalie *kept* the appointment. The specious arguments and representations of the handsome young man—

who called himself Edward Brown—easily prevailed on her to repeat the interview. They became frequent—at last almost nightly—until, one fatal evening, Edward persuaded her to pay a visit to his aunt—oh, those aunts!—a worthy and respectable quaker lady, who had the greatest desire to see the future wife of her nephew. In fact, he had positively promised that she should come. He was so persuasive—so tender—so handsome! So, what could the poor girl do? She was already desperately in love; and a girl in love, thinks her lover every thing grand, godlike and supernatural. And so—and so—

“A little still she strove, and much repented—
And whispering, ‘I will ne’er consent,’ consented!”

Mrs. Anthony—the reader may have already divined her—was as much at the service of the young and dashing Edward Ingraham,—under his assumed name of Brown—as of the old and cautious Ira Henderson. Between them both, she drove a prosperous trade; and, if one might judge from her sleek, healthy and robustious form, and round smooth face, slept soundly, and kept an easy conscience.

Rosalie had already been several months in the house of Mrs. Anthony, when the incidents occurred which are related in the following chapters.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MATINÉE MUSICALE.

FROM the fierce and bloody contests of the Blue and Green factions of the Byzantine Hippodrome, which lasted for four centuries, and whose contests frequently decided the fate of contending aspirants for the imperial purple, and massacred thousands in a single day, society has been more or less agitated and divided on the subject of the choice of colours. The long and terrible contests of the White and Red roses—the massacres of the Cockade in France—the struggles of the Buff and the Blue in England's later days—the Red Republican massacres, and the Orange Riots of our own time—to say nothing of the Blue Laws of Connecticut, which are just now coming into force again, with more than their original stringency—are all too familiar to the Enlightened Public, for us to detain it with a recapitulation of the events to which they have led.

But, perhaps in the whole history of these contests of colours; no severer or more protracted struggle is on record, than that which took place in the mind of Miss

Jemima Jenkins, on the emergent question whether she looked best by daylight in Red or Blue!

It will perhaps be recollected, that, although Miss Jenkins had industriously propounded this question to every one of her acquaintances in turn, the only succinct suggestion which had been vouchsafed to her, was that of her friend and relative, Mrs. Henderson, who had briefly but frequently advised her to "try both." After much and painful deliberation on this point—after having purchased the last three numbers of *Graham's Magazine*, and carefully studied the effects of the various contrasts of colour, as exhibited in its fascinating fashion-plates—Miss Jemima at length actually resolved the question by taking her aunt's advice. Yes—she was determined to try both! The effect was, at least, striking. The skirt of her dress was of bright blue—the four flounces dazzling red. The boddice was disposed in alternate stripes of blue and red; the feathers on one side of her newly-curled peruke were blue marabouts—on the other, red. The strings of this remarkable head-dress, were each blue and red, *decussating* beneath the chin, and streaming over her shoulders like the pennants of two packet-ships in the Delaware, belonging to opposite lines. Her scarf was blue, with red fringe; and we verily believe, though we have no ocular evidence to offer on the subject—*Honi soit qui mal y pense*, you know!—that the poor puzzled maid's stockings and garters, were of the same variegated complexion.

The effect of this costume upon the crowded and

brilliant assemblage, at the *matinée musicale* of Mrs. Valentine, was tremendous. Many of the younger portion of the audience supposed that she was to be a part of the performance; and at the end of every piece, expected her to make her appearance, and go through with a fancy-dance. However, nothing of this kind occurred. Miss Jenkins, somewhat oppressed by her gorgeousness, and embarrassed by the unusual attention she received, modestly retired to a seat behind one of the drawing-room doors, whence she did not move during the entire performance.

And now, all the guests being arrived, and the little satin-paper programmes distributed liberally on all sides, at about four o'clock, the concert really began.

Madame de Saintlieu, the object of universal attention—that *rara avis*, a woman whom women have consented to lionize—entered, during an introductory from the piano, played despite his courage, very irregularly and nervously by poor Wilmar, whose blood was set tingling, and fingers wandering, by the rustle of Madame de Saintlieu's dress, smiling encouragingly as she passed. She was, of course, very much quizzed and criticised by all the ladies. The tall ones thought her too short; the thin, too stout; the skinny declared her arms were too large; and those who for obvious reasons always wore their dresses buttoned up to the throat, were considerably shocked at the looseness of her corsage. However, on the whole she got off pretty well with the female part

of the audience—and as to the gentlemen, they were a little afraid of her. All agreed that she was an “uncommonly fine woman”—but there was something in her easy calmness and unconscious self-possession, which made them uneasy.

It had been voted permissible to applaud; and as she stood up to sing, she was greeted with an immense clapping of kid gloves; and here and there, some ambitious young gentlemen, whose moustaches and Italian were in the very earliest stages of development, commenced crying *bray-vo bray-vah* and *bray-vi*, in all the terminations of which a bray may be supposed to be susceptible, before she had sung a note.

A large number of the audience, however, knew what they were about, and had really come to hear. All now was profound silence; and as Wilmar faintly struck the few preliminary chords of Leonora’s prayer, the solemn and despairing expression, which the music seemed to call up on the artist’s countenance, made every heart still its beating, and every bosom suspend its breath. She began so tremblingly and low, that several of the “regular old stagers,” as they call themselves, began to fear for “stage fright,” and to exchange those glances of triumphant pity, which so freely circulate when any misfortune happens to an artist’s voice and execution—as much as to say, “There! did you hear that?—Poor thing!”

But their fears were groundless. Before the first few bars were over, they forgot that they were listening to an elegant French woman, faultlessly dressed, as

if she had but to-day stepped from the faubourg St. Germain, and seemed to hear alone the wailing and pleading of a broken heart—of a woman dying of shame, and remorse, and inextinguishable love. The critics forgot to take notes—the unmusical forgot that they didn't care anything about music—many sighed and grew pale with emotion—and many wept unrestrainedly. When the last accents of the prayer had died away, there was a pause, and then a spontaneous *brava!* quite unconventional and vulgar, but none the less hearty and sincere. Then came congratulations—sincere, for once; for the strength of the emotions which the artist had excited, overcame, for the moment, the ordinary affectations and concealed jealousies which repress art and poison society.

It was now Wilmar's turn, with his grand *capriccio*, over which he had spent so many hours. Before he commenced, the young musician turned to her who had inspired his composition, as if to renew the spell under which his imagination had first struck it out. She was there, with that same calm, steady, strength-imparting smile, which she had first fixed upon him. He replied by a look of gratitude, devotion, love—everything that the heart of genius may feel for the woman who has first awakened the deep fountains of his soul, and showed the heavens and earth, and all things beautiful, reflected there.

The *capriccio* went off splendidly. It was really superbly played, so far as feeling and fancy were concerned—and the composition possessed many beauties.

Madame de Saintlieu, however, for whose applause alone the artist looked, shook her head with a playful smile—as much as to say, “I don’t like it so well as the first time.” He understood her; and rising from the piano, went to her, to explain, that much of his small stock of electricity was necessarily wasted in such a crowd.

“But you?” he continued; “may I ask you a question?”

“Yes, as many as you please.”

“It is a very impertinent one; I believe,” he said, hesitating.

“I will take the risk of that. Proceed.”

“Well, then—have you not sung on the stage?”

“Never.”

“How, then, do you obtain that perfect self-possession and composure?”

“Because I have no ambition.”

“You cannot mean that.”

“Yes, I do—I mean that the bane of all artists is their constant self-criticism. Nothing is to be done in art without absolute, entire abandonment. This is the old story, but it is the only true one. But you really played well. Did he not, Mrs. Loftus?”

“Oh, you know I don’t pretend to be a judge of music; but I have never been so much affected by the piano before in my life.”

Mrs. Glacée now brought up Mr. Attarby, to be presented to Madame de Saintlieu. He spoke feelingly and judiciously of her singing. She was surprised to

see how much better taste he had in music than women—and although she said nothing, yet an almost imperceptible glance from Mrs. Loftus, told her that her thoughts were understood.

“*A propos*,” said Mrs. Valentine, coming up from the bottom of the saloon, where she had been to see the effect, and to admire the complete and brilliant success of her entertainment. “What news do you bring from the other house!” Mr. Attarby? That was really too cruel of Mrs. Attarby, to lend herself to Mrs. Henderson, to break me down.”

“Oh, I haven’t been there yet—nor do I intend to go until evening. I should not wonder if my adorable wife played them all some prank, in revenge for Mrs. Henderson’s previous slighting of her.”

“Oh,” said Mrs. Balderskin, making her way to the group of talkers, “did you hear your wife’s last *bon mot*, about Mrs. Henderson? I got it of poor Jemima, who sits yonder behind the door, buried in the American flag, and doesn’t dare to stir.”

“But the *bon mot*. I hear so many good things of my wife, that I really wish she would try and keep some of them for home consumption.”

“Oh, Mrs. Henderson, half alarmed at having invited an actress into her house, said, confidentially to Jemima, that she really was afraid she should never dare, after all, to sit down to the table with her. Of course, Jemima, being bound to secrecy, went to Mrs. Attarby with the complimentary speech.”

“And what was the reply?” inquired Mrs. Glacée.

“‘Oh,’ said the *tragedienne*; ‘she need not be afraid—genius isn’t catching!’ Capital, was it not?”

“Ha! ha! very excellent, upon my word!” said Mr. Attarby, with a grimace. “But I think it is Madame de Saintlieu’s wish to go on with the programme.”—“Will you do me the honour, madame?” he continued, offering his hand to lead her to the piano.

But we will not pursue the course of the programme further. It is enough that the affair was in every way a success. Mrs. Valentine was in high spirits, and declared that it was the happiest day of her life. She was profuse in her thanks to Mrs. Loftus, who had introduced Madame de Saintlieu.

“But, my dear Mrs. Loftus,” said she, taking her aside, “*who is* Madame de Saintlieu? Isn’t she some great celebrity in disguise?”

“No—she is exactly what she represents herself. Her letters to Mr. Loftus are unquestionable, and so is her position. Had I not been certain of this, you may be sure, my dear madam, that I should not have introduced her *here*.”

There might have been a slight tone of irony in this, but Mrs. Valentine was too well pleased with herself and every body around her, to be sensible of it.

“So, she has come here to support her children, you say? How did she lose her fortune?”

“I do not know that she has actually lost her fortune—I believe her income is only suspended for a time, owing to the assets, deposits and all, of some

delinquent banker in Paris, being taken possession of by the courts."

"Does she mean to go on the stage?"

"I trust not. The talent and genius so conspicuous in a drawing-room, her natural sphere, would probably fail her on the stage, to which she is entirely unused. Besides, we must keep her to ourselves."

After the music was over, the favoured few, who had received special invitations, remained, for supper and a dance. Wilmar, who was dying for this opportunity of conversing with Madame de Saintlieu, still felt uneasy respecting Helen—although he did not know exactly what he feared. He therefore took leave of Mrs. Valentine and explained to Madame de Saintlieu the reason for his going,—adding that he hoped that their acquaintance was not necessarily to end because the concert was over.

"I trust not," she replied, frankly and sincerely, but without manifesting the least embarrassment; "it will always give me pleasure to see you, while I remain here."

"I trust to you for teaching me many things about art, that I have partly dreamed of, but do not know."

"Trust more to yourself—think not of the opinions of others—at least, not now. This is the best advice I can give you."

"Adieu, madam!" and he held out his hand.

She gave him her soft hand, whose touch again thrilled him, as on that day when their fingers had met on the keys of the piano. He held it a moment

—he seemed as if he were about, unconsciously, to put it to his lips. She gently withdrew it, and said, softly, “good night!”

But, these two little syllables contained a tone which, to him, made them a reward for all the evils and disasters of life. And yet, how mistaken he was! They were kind, sincerely, truly kind—nothing more. Let not the wild-eyed artist dream that there was aught else in that tone!

CHAPTER XIV.

A NIGHT OF BLOOD.

INGRAHAM did not make his appearance at the concert. With that waywardness which characterized all his movements, he studiously kept out of the way, merely because he was particularly wanted. After an evening spent in the same round of low dissipation which we have already described,—going from haunt to haunt, each lower than the other in the scale of depravity,—he stole away from his companions, about midnight; and making his way to the house of Mrs. Anthony, opened the door noiselessly, and went in.

A night-lamp stood on the hall table, which he took, and proceeded up the stairs. When he was about half-way up, a door in the hall above, opened, and a woman in her night-clothes, and bare-footed, leaned over the banisters, saying, “Is that you, Mr. Brown?”

“Yes, Mrs. Anthony,” replied Ingraham, looking up at the woman; “it’s all right. Has Rosalie gone to bed?”

“I don’t know—I guess not. She don’t seem to be

well to-night. She got a letter this morning, which set her off in a terrible way. I've been taking care of her all the evening. But she's better now. "Good night." And the woman went back into her own room."

Ingraham—or Brown, as we must now call him, went on up the other staircase to the third story, muttering to himself, "A letter! Who can have been writing to her? I wonder what's in the wind."

He found Rosalie in a night-wrapper, sitting in a low rocking-chair, with her elbows on a table by her side, and her chin supported by her hands, gazing at a miniature lying before her. She did not look up, or change her posture in the least, as he came in. An open letter was lying on the table—her handkerchief, limp with tears, beside it: but she was not weeping now. The storm had expended its fury, though the face was still clouded, and the eyes looked red and glared strangely.

"Why, Rosalie, what's the matter, girl?" said Ingraham, going towards her.

"Stand off!" she uttered, in a low, quick voice. "Do not come any nearer to me,—see here!" and she drew a small silver-cased dagger from the bosom of her night-wrapper.

"Are you crazy, girl?" said Ingraham, starting back—for your fast man is not over fond of cold steel in any other shape than an oyster-knife. "What's the matter, I say?"

"Is your name Ingraham?" said the girl, in the same low, spasmodic voice.

“Ingraham! No!” he replied, turning pale.—
“What do you mean? Don’t you know me?”

“Yes—I do know you. You are Edward Ingraham, nephew of Mrs. Valentine,—and besides, you are an infamous, black-hearted villain!”

“Rosalie!—Take care! Do you know what you are saying? Who has put all this nonsense into your head?”

“Read that letter”—and she flung it towards him.

He stooped, and took it from the floor, where it had fallen; then, approaching the light, but carefully keeping the table between him and the girl, he sat down and read:

“Mademoiselle,—I do not know you; but, whoever you are, you are a woman, and therefore deserve to be saved. Do you know the man you have trusted with your destiny? Do you even know his real name? It is Edward Ingraham, and he is the nephew of Mrs. Valentine, of —— street. He is about paying his addresses to a wealthy young lady in his own circle of society. I have warned you—I say no more.”

“A WOMAN.”

“When did you receive this? Where did it come from? Where is the envelope?”

“No matter. Is it true?”

“No—no!—It’s a lie—an infamous lie! I know nothing of your Edward Ingrahams and your fashionable young ladies. But I’ll know who wrote that letter—that I will!”

“It is no matter who wrote the letter, or where it came from: for it is true, Edward—true—all true! and you have deceived and betrayed me. Oh God! I wish I was dead! Will you have pity on me? Will you right me before heaven and earth? Will you do what you have so often and so solemnly promised? Will you marry me?”

“My dear Rosalie,” stammered Ingraham, “I am astonished at you—what can all this mean? You surely are not so foolish as to believe the absurd statements of an anonymous letter. I thought you knew the world better. It is probably the invention of some enemy or rival of mine, who has seen you, and wishes to supplant me in your affections. What have you got there? A miniature!—Let me see it. I never knew you had a miniature.”

“Yes—look at it. It is my mother’s picture—she put it round my neck with her dying hands, when I was a little child,—oh, I remember well that dreadful day! Never has it left me for a moment.—Look at those dear features: think that my mother’s spirit is now watching over her poor, erring, betrayed, helpless child! May it inspire your heart with pity! Edward, you have deceived me: that letter is true. Mrs. Anthony is not your aunt—so much I forced from her trembling lips this very night, when she would have consoled me in my agony. Edward, I loved you dearly—I still love you—when I cease to love you, I must die. You are to me all the world. I was innocent and happy—I might have lived virtuously, and met

my mother in heaven. I gave my destiny into your hands: you have betrayed me. But it is not too late. —Edward, my beloved—will you do me right? Will you save me from despair? Will you bind me to your heart forever? Will you keep your oft-pledged, sacred promise? Oh, Edward, I implore you, answer me! It is my life I ask of you!”

That pure, saintly, angelic face had lost all traces of anger—it beamed only with divine, ineffable love and tenderness. There were moments in Edward’s life, when his better angel was present with him, and when he could not have withstood that pleading face. But now, he was under the influence of the demon. He was flushed with drink, and excited by all the brutal passions and appetites which a night’s orgy among the haunts of vice and low debauchery could not but inspire. Love, virtue, marriage,—amid such images and recollections, they seemed but mockeries.

He gazed at the being before him, neither with fear, astonishment, nor love, but with the gross passions his night’s excesses were calculated to arouse. Lovely she was; her beauty had first drawn him towards her—but, beautiful as she now was, he had never seen her.

There she stood—her long waving hair falling around her, her eyes flashing, her nostrils dilated. One arm extended towards him, clasped the dagger—the other strove to still the beatings of her heaving bosom.

“Rosalie,” said he, after a moment’s pause; “all I ask of you is love. Are you not beautiful, that you

may be loved? Come, forget this nonsensical letter! You are mine—what marriage could make you any more mine than love? Come, Rosalie! Edward Ingraham, or Edward Brown, am I not still your Edward?”

As he spoke, Edward advanced towards Rosalie, and attempted to clasp her in his arms; but she darted from him, with a look of defiance and contempt.

“Dare you insult me too? No! you are not my Edward! My Edward was noble, truthful, just; not the degraded creature, reeking from low taverns, who now reels before me. Shame, shame, on you! your very touch would chill me!—Keep off! Remember all your sacred vows! In the eyes of God I am your wife, and as your wife, respect me.”

“Wife!” said Ingraham, laughing scornfully; “men do not marry their mistresses. And if I am, as you so hotly insist, Edward Ingraham, the rich nephew of the aristocratic Mrs. Valentine, that itself is an insuperable bar to my marrying a shop-girl. You have mistaken your game, my pretty Rosalie! The phantom you have yourself conjured up, stands forever between you and your wishes.

“Come, let us have no more fooling! If you have done it to show how uncommonly handsome you are when you play tragedy, you have entirely succeeded! But now let me smooth back that lovely hair, and kiss your flushed cheek, and still your throbbing heart.—Come, Rosalie!”

Again Ingraham drew near Rosalie; but she again

retreated; and standing against the wall of the room, she threw her robe open, and putting the dagger's point on to the firm round bosom, thus disclosed, she exclaimed, wildly,—

“Keep off!” Seducer! miscreant! You shall never touch me more! I have trusted you; and God knows that relying on you as on him, my love for you was pure and holy as a wife's. I will not be your mistress! Take but one step nearer—stretch but your arm towards me—and you shall see that I choose death rather than infamy!”

“We will see who is the strongest, then, my pretty tragedy queen! Yes, indeed! I did not come here to be thwarted and scorned by my own mistress—by a woman who lives by my bounty!” With these words he rushed forward, and clutched at his victim; but, with a violent effort she disengaged herself, and fled past him. Ingraham pursued her, maddened with passion; but suddenly, just as he was about again to clasp her, Rosalie fell to the ground, and there, without uttering a word, she lay motionless at his feet.

He stopped, with his arms still extended, and gazed down on her in wonder. He saw that in flying, her foot had tripped over a footstool, and that thus she had fallen. He looked down on her, motionless, as she lay—half fancying she was feigning, and waiting for him to raise her in his arms. But she moved not. Had she fainted? Edward knelt down beside her. She had fallen on her face. He raised her in his arms, and snatching a cushion from a sofa, placed her

head gently on it. Hastily he parted the beautiful tresses which veiled the face. Pale, pale, was it now; and the scorn still on the lip and on the brow. She has fainted! Still further back he throws the hair—so long, that it fell far below her waist. It touches his face, as he flings it back—so soft, so warm, it brings the tears to his eyes; and in accents of love, he whispers,

“Rosalie! dear Rosalie!” Still she moves not. He puts his hand on her heart—Oh, God! He encounters the cold hilt of the dagger! and taking his eyes from that long-loved face, where till now they had rested, he beholds the deep red blood trickling down the white bosom, and staining the muslin robe.

Had the dagger pierced her heart by chance, as she fell?—or had her own will accomplished the work it threatened? That secret lies between herself and God. But Edward’s conscience almost taxed him with the deed; and withdrawing his arm from under her, the corpse—for she, the breathing, living, loving woman, is now a corpse—falls, with a dull heavy sound to the ground. Still kneeling by her side he buried his face in his hands.

“Dead! dead!” The words sounded in a thousand tones in Edward’s ears, as there, sobered and horror-stricken, he knelt. Dead, by his fault—almost by his hand! This appalling thought brought the world and selfish feelings back to him at once. Dead! murdered! and *he* might be thought the murderer! Hastily he arose; looked down for one instant with horror and fear, no longer with love and sorrow, on the bleeding

corse—then, putting out the light, and forgetting all, in his cowardly fear, but his own miserable self, he stole noiselessly out of the room and down the stairs—opened the street door, without a sound—closed it carefully behind him—and rushed down the street, pursued by the furies of death and hell.

On he ran, never daring to pause or look behind him—though he thought he heard the footsteps of those who started out from every walk and corner, to join in mad pursuit of him. But it was only fancy. A discreet watchman or two, aroused by the rapid footsteps, started from the tree or door-step against which he was leaning, and looked curiously after the fugitive. But, as no one followed, and there was no particular disturbance of the public peace, he did not feel called upon to interfere. Perhaps the gentleman was running for a wager!

Ingraham reached his aunt's house in safety; and entering as noiselessly as a thief, he did not breathe freely until he found himself in his own room, the door of which he locked. Then, throwing himself into a chair, he covered his face with his hands, and tried to think.

He had not killed the girl—true; but he had subsequently *acted* precisely as if had killed her. Were it to be known that he was alone with her in her chamber—that he had crept out of the house, and run as if for life, till he reached his own room—no human being would be convinced that he had not murdered her with his own hand. Withdrawing his right hand from his

face, he started and shuddered with a new horror. It was stained with blood! And his clothes were also bloody, where he had held the dead girl in his arms—and his very boots, where she had fallen down, and lay across his feet. All was blood, blood! He looked fearfully round the room, and in the tall psyche glass, where he had so admired himself in the morning, he caught sight of a white and ghastly face—and that, too, was spotted and dabbled with blood. Even there the crimson stamp of murder was upon him! He felt that he was going mad—he had only just self-command enough to refrain from shrieking aloud for help.

CHAPTER XV.

THE GLASS DOOR.

It has been stated that the room in which Helen was imprisoned, had a glazed door, originally communicating with another apartment, but which had been fastened up, and a sofa placed in front of it—showing evidently that its use had been definitely abandoned, in the present apportionment of the chambers, and that it was considered merely as forming a portion of the partition wall. The door was glazed, for about half the distance from the top, but the transparency of the glass had been destroyed, by a coating of white paint.

When Helen first discovered that she was a prisoner, and had been decoyed to the house by some deep-laid plot of villany, this glass door naturally became an object of scrutiny, in the hope that it might possibly afford some way of escape, which her enemies had forgotten to close against her. The examination, however, resulted in nothing satisfactory. The door was not only locked, but, as she discovered by removing the sofa, strongly secured by large nails, driven through the door and into the solid casement. She thought

she discovered, however, an aperture in one of the highest panes of glass; and by replacing the sofa, and standing partly on the back, and supporting herself by clinging to the posts of the door on either side, she was enabled to apply her eye to the aperture, and thus obtain a partial view of the room beyond. It appeared that the door served as the back of a small closet, so constructed as to be used by the occupant of either chamber, or, by opening both doors, to serve as a thoroughfare from one to the other. By the present arrangement, the closet belonged exclusively to the back chamber, and the door opening into the front where Helen was imprisoned, was, as we have seen, firmly closed.

From the disposition of various articles in the closet, it was evident that the door opening into the back chamber, to which the closet now belonged, was never closed.

We beg the reader to bear in mind this brief but minute description of the situation and arrangement of the two chambers—as it is indispensable to an understanding of the catastrophe of our history.

While Helen stood thus painfully supporting herself, and looking into the adjoining chamber, the figure of a young girl advanced from the corner of the room towards the hall, which she could not see, and passed in front of the closet door. She appeared to be in great excitement, and walked rapidly up and down the room, making violent gesticulations, and apparently weeping convulsively. Once or twice she

stopped in front of Helen, and gazed fixedly upon an open letter which she held in her hand, but which she evidently had already perused more than once. Her lips moved, but Helen could not hear even the sound of her voice. The cavernous space of the intervening closet deadened and swallowed up the sound.

At length, the young girl ceased walking, and threw herself into a chair, near the bed, and between that and a little table, which stood directly in front of the closet door—so that Helen now had an uninterrupted view of the girl, and of all her movements.

After leaning back for a few moments in her chair, the girl sat erect, laid her letter on the table, and drew a miniature from her bosom, upon which she gazed intently, until she was obliged to wipe away the tears that flowed fast and plenteously down her cheeks.

The face of the young girl, though changed and clouded with weeping, and the excitement of some terrible passion, was extremely beautiful. Under the influence, apparently, of the miniature upon which she was gazing, the traces of anger and hatred gradually disappeared, and the countenance assumed an almost angelic character of tenderness and trustfulness.

Helen was powerfully interested in this young and lovely girl. Had she, too, like herself, been betrayed into this infamous abode of vice, and was she, like Helen, bewailing the infatuation which had perhaps placed her life and honour in peril? Or was she an older inmate of this place? Had she already fallen

beneath the machinations of her foes—for that face was guilelessness, was purity itself; and was she now lamenting her cruel and hopeless destiny? Diverted for a moment from her own perils—like all noble natures who behold another in suffering—she vainly endeavoured to devise some means of rendering assistance to her sister in affliction. But what could she do? Herself a prisoner—seduced from her home, and her family even ignorant of where she had set out to go—what had she to expect? Long before assistance could discover her, the plotters against her, whoever they were, and whatever might be their designs, would have abundance of time to carry out their plans, and work her ruin. This thought made her frantic; and forgetting for the moment the stranger who had so powerfully excited her sympathies she sprang from the sofa, ran to the outside windows, which, as we have said, were securely fastened, and then commenced calling and beating furiously at the door, until her strength gave way, and she fell on the floor in a swoon.

Her subsequent interview with Ira Henderson had been of so overpowering an excitement as to drive all thought of her unhappy neighbor from her memory; but when she was again left alone, her mind reverted to her fellow captive, and she once more took her post of observation.

The young girl was seated in the same place as before. But she had taken off the walking-dress in which Helen had at first seen her, and put on a flowing night-wrapper, made of very thin white muslin,

and which showed the exquisite proportions of her young and slender form, as if it had been draped around a statue. Her countenance was now much more composed, and an expression of a settled and desperate determination, had imparted a dignity and character to her face, strangely at variance with its infantile and piquant contour. She was evidently passing through one of those crises of life, in which years are condensed to hours and moments.

Half regretting her own terrors, and the despair with which she contemplated the return of Henderson, as he had promised—a promise which she could not doubt he would punctually keep—she continued to watch the young girl.

The letter lay open on the little table—and the miniature was placed directly before the girl, who, leaning her elbows upon the table, and supporting her head on her hands, gazed at it intently—but she no longer wept.

At this moment, a slight noise was heard in the hall—which Helen could distinguish through her own door, although she could hear nothing that took place in the room adjoining. Soon, a figure passed into her field of vision, and stopping on the side of the table towards the door, presented its profile to her view.

Either her senses were wandering, or it was the face of Edward Ingraham! The face now turned more fully into the light, and she saw distinctly that it was indeed he—once her own, her still loved Edward, whose false and shallow baseness had broken her heart, and disenchanted her life!

What did he here? Alas! what followed enabled her too well to guess. She saw the young girl display her little dagger—saw her lips pour out the torrent of words which she could not hear, but whose meaning was too clearly expressed by her speaking face, now again roused and distorted with emotion. She beheld, at length, the pursuit of Ingraham, and the flight of the girl, and finally saw her fall forward on her face.

Then Edward came into sight again—raised the girl in his arms; and Helen beheld, at the same instant as he, the blood upon her garments and her bosom—and with a wild scream of horror, she half-fell, half-leaped, to the floor.—Dishonour, madness, death, were around and before her.

But this was the moment that inspired all her wisdom, all her energy. It must be nearly the hour at which Ira Henderson had promised to return to her; and, at all events, her screams would inevitably send some one up stairs.

Quickly putting on her bonnet and shawl, she stationed herself close to the hinges of the door, so that when it was opened, she would be screened, until the person had entered the room. Then, to dart through the door, down stairs, and so into the street, was now her only hope.

It was as she had thought. In a few minutes she heard footsteps on the stairs, and in the hall. They approached her door—it opened—and Ira Henderson entered. Quick as thought, or as the bird who escapes

his cage, she darted into the hall, overthrew Mrs. Anthony on the landing, descended to the front door, which was only fastened by the dead-latch—leaped out, and ran, half wild with terror, through the streets.

But her senses, quickened by the imminence of her danger, by the horror inspired by all she had witnessed, and the fear of being overtaken, did not desert her, until she had reached her own home and rang the bell. The door was instantly opened by Arthur, who had just come back, half dead from alarm and despair, from a fruitless visit to all the neighbouring police stations, and who now joyfully received his sister's fainting form in his arms.

Emma and Kate, who had been frantic at their sister's protracted absence, and who had all night watched at door and window, carried her to her room, and put her to bed. But it was long before she returned to life—and many hours ere consciousness and memory were restored. Then she told her brother and sisters how they had all been deceived, and what was the real character of Mrs. Anthony and her house. She did not relate the terrible tragedy she had witnessed, but dwelt upon the peril she had escaped, and the means by which she had regained her liberty. She did not pronounce the names of either Ingraham or Henderson. She was not herself, as yet, sure of what she wished, nor of what might be her actual duty. Her brain was still weak and confused; and thanking Arthur and her sisters for their kind cares, and tenderly inquiring after their mother, she begged to be permitted to sleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BLOODY FOOTSTEPS.

WHEN Ira Henderson returned to the chamber where Helen was imprisoned, the State House clock was striking three—all great merchants are models of punctuality, as well as of all the other virtues! And it was at three o'clock, precisely, that he had promised to return and complete the ruin of the daughter of his dearest friend, having previously beggared the whole family, according to the strictest requisitions of the commercial law—(*vide*, Spearbill, *passim*!)

Not seeing his victim, he advanced into the room, supposing that she had shrunk into the furthest corner, or had perhaps hidden in some closet, to escape his gentle attentions.

But no Helen was there! Had he mistaken the room? No—the door was locked, and he had opened it with the key which he took from his own pocket. Still, bed-room locks were all alike, and one chamber very much resembled another. He had been too much absorbed in his principal design, to notice particularly either the locality or the furniture of the room; and

he might possibly have been mistaken. Thus thinking, and still very much puzzled, and very much in doubt, he returned to the hall; and going to the head of the stairs, he encountered Mrs. Anthony, who had just recovered from the effects of her sudden and unexpected contact with the flying Helen, and was slowly attempting to regain her feet.

But now, as he looked down, he found himself standing in a little puddle of some dark-coloured liquid, that seemed to have oozed out from beneath the door of the room at the head of the stairs, against the casement of which he was almost leaning. He was by nature courageous, and his nerves were firmly strung: still, a shudder ran through his frame, as the conviction flashed upon him, that he was standing in a pool of blood!

Hastily stepping back, he pointed at the slippery spot, and demanded of Mrs. Anthony, who now struggled her way to the top of the stairs, who was in that room.

“Oh, nobody but a young friend of mine from the country—nobody that you know any thing of.”

“But see there! Look at that blood!—Open the door, instantly!”

In nameless terror, the woman obeyed; and there, cold and dead, lay the beautiful Rosalie! The blood, flowing in a torrent from her breast, had crept along the floor, and over the threshold, to bear its testimony to the awful scene within. The man and woman looked at one another, for a moment, stupified. Then each,

thinking only of self and safety, hastened down stairs—the woman to return to her room, gather up her money and such valuables as she could herself carry away—for she knew her own character and deeds too well to run the risk of waiting for the investigation of this bloody transaction, and had instantly determined on flight,—while Henderson himself rushed down stairs, and made his way with all possible secrecy and speed, to a distant part of the city—whence, proceeding more leisurely, he at length found a cab, and waking the sleepy driver, he jumped in, and ordered him to drive to the Walnut street ferry—intending to cross over to Camden, walk about till morning, and return to the city with the passengers by the early train—thus carrying out the idea he had originally caused to be believed by his clerks, that he had gone to Trenton.

But this scheme, natural and sagacious as it was, failed. A captain of police, returning from his nightly rounds, saw Henderson as he issued from the house in Cherry street. He had for some time entertained strong suspicions of the character of this house; and now, that he saw the great quaker merchant, whose person was well known to him, coming out of it, clandestinely, between three and four o'clock in the morning, he no longer felt a doubt. Shrugging his shoulders at the discovery he had made, he passed on, muttering to himself,

“Who would have thought to find that immaculate old gentleman in such business!—Well! well! The

world is all alike—saints and sinners, Quakers and all! But it's nothing to me. So long as he doesn't disturb the peace of the public, he has a right to go where he pleases. But it's lucky, though, that some of the *vampyres** didn't get hold of him. He would have been a nice victim for them to suck!"

At this moment, the officer was met by one of the policemen of the beat, who came towards him with that air of mysterious importance, which no one but a policeman ever has equalled—excepting, perhaps, Lord Burleigh, in the *critic*, and the worthy Baron Pompolino.

"Captain Butler," said the policeman, "I am sure there is something very queer a going on in No. — Cherry street. The woman of the house, who I've often seen, and have had my eye on for some time, has just come out, with a big bundle in her hand, and cut stick as if the devil was after her. That's very suspicious, I think, at this time of the morning."

"I think so too, Wilkins. We will go directly, and see what all this means. I too have had suspicions of the character of that establishment."

They proceeded to the house.—The door was locked, and no attention was paid to the bell. After satisfying themselves that there was no one in the house, Captain Butler, in view of the very suspicious circumstances of which he was cognizant, became convinced

* This is the name, in police slang, for those creatures who prowl about disreputable houses, and *levy black mail* upon the men and women who visit them.

that some deed of crime and darkness had been perpetrated within its walls. He therefore decided upon forcing the door immediately, as the first step necessary to the clearing up of the mystery. Wilkins was accordingly sent to the station-house, where a complete set of skeleton keys, and other burglarious instruments, are always kept. In a few minutes he returned, and the front door was opened.

The reader is already aware of the scene that awaited them. Covering up the body of the dead girl, Captain Butler commenced seeking for some clue which might lead to the confirmation of the conjectures he had already formed as to the perpetrators of this diabolical deed. Tracing the blood from the spot where the girl had fallen, to the door and into the hall, he saw by the light of the lantern, two distinct footsteps traced in blood, as if some one had stepped into it in passing down stairs. These footsteps, which were wonderfully well defined, the sagacious officer carefully measured with a pocket rule, noting down the measurement, both of length and breadth, in a little memorandum book. He then took a pencil of red chalk from his pocket, and marked, as carefully as he could, the outline of the footsteps, lest the blood should dry, or be absorbed in the floor, and leave no trace.

Meanwhile, Wilkins had been by no means idle. He had detected and instantly seized upon the letter and the miniature which still lay on the table—but he did not think it necessary to mention this trifling circumstance to his superior. He was now despatched

for the coronor in all haste, while Captain Butler himself remained to watch the premises, and guard them from all the slightest disturbance of the least detail, until that officer should arrive.

Poor Rosalie! Mother and daughter both confided to the tender care of the coroner, with none to waft a sigh or a prayer after you, on your journey to the dark and turbid Styx! Who says that the law of hereditary possessions is not founded in nature? At least *destinies* are faithfully transmitted. The moral characteristics, far more than the mental endowments, impart themselves to the offspring of our loves.—Destiny is immortal—she will not pause to fashion so slight a thing as the fate of a single individual—she sums up, in one terrible hieroglyphic, the catastrophes of a race.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DEVIL IN WHITE SATIN.

NOTWITHSTANDING the solicitude entertained by Mrs. Henderson, lest her attempt to engage Mrs. Attarby for her dinner and *conversazione* should fail, and her self-congratulation at her success, there were moments when she almost trembled at what she had done, for fear of its possible consequences upon her own standing and position. Although she and her husband represented, in their own persons, the two oldest, wealthiest, and most decidedly aristocratic families of the two divisions of the quaker sect, and thus far she had found no opposition to her wishes or views, still she knew the stolid obstinacy with which the whole body of Friends, whether "gay or grave," maintained a point, when it had once been taken. She recalled to mind the persecution of an eminently pious and learned preacher of the sect, in the early days of the colony, who had been exiled and finally driven to open apostacy, because he would not bow down implicitly to the mandates of the brethren, in some minor and unimportant matters of church discipline. True, the outward cha-

racter and conduct had, since that time, undergone almost as great changes, as the face of the city itself, which had grown from a puritanic village in the wilderness, to one of the gayest, richest, and most fashionable cities on the continent. Still there were certain *appearances* which, the more the substance of the early strictness of morals had disappeared, were the more stringently insisted on.

Among these, the two most important and inveterate, were a hatred of every thing appertaining to the theatre, and an uncompromising hostility to dancing. Shakespeare and Cellarius were regarded, in connexion with their father the devil, as forming the trinity of iniquity. To dance, was to challenge the wrath of the God of David, who danced before the ark; while the door of the theatre was shunned, as though the "pit" to which it led, was the bottomless one itself.

Mrs. Henderson, although heartily despising all this detestable cant, had never dared openly to set her face against it. To attend concerts, and allow her daughter, was as far as she dared to go. Indeed, she had not been able to accomplish this, without a serious struggle with her husband—a struggle which he obstinately maintained, and in which he evidently put forth all his powers, for the purpose of accurately measuring his own strength against that of his wife, and ascertaining exactly how they stood. The result was a complete humiliation. At every point she had shown her decided superiority. From that moment, he retired in disgust from the contest, and in every

thing relating to the government and conduct of the family, he allowed her to have her own way—simply because he had discovered that he could not prevent it.

But now in the heat of her animosity for her rival, and her settled determination to eclipse her on the present occasion, she had gone, she feared, a step too far. While Mrs. Attarby, under her maiden name, was still on the stage, Mrs. Henderson had resolutely refused to visit the theatre—although she knew that her rival, Mrs. Valentine, was nightly drawing around her, there, the fashionable men of the town, and her own dull parlours were deserted.

On the other hand, she reasoned, that, since Miss Carlton, the celebrated actress, had married Mr. Attarby, an undoubted member of fashionable society, and had finally withdrawn from the stage, her character and position had necessarily undergone a complete change,—and this had ever been acknowledged by herself and several ladies of her circle had formally recognised her as the wife of a member of their class, by the usual pasteboard civility of a call.—This call had never been returned—being resented by Mrs. Attarby as a gross and impertinent insult. And upon her husband attempting to remonstrate, throwing herself into the attitude, and assuming the tone, of high tragedy, she had overwhelmed him with such an outburst of contempt, disdain and indignation, that he had fainly run out of the house, and had never since had courage to renew the subject.

But now, not only had the acknowledged leader of

the *crème de la crème* of Philadelphia society, renewed this happily-got-over acquaintance, but she had actually stooped to beg a favour of her, and that favour—horror upon horrors!—to appear at her own house, in the very character in which she had been shunned as a lesser—that of an actress!

But it was now too late to recede. The whole world—that is, the two or three hundred families composing cliques of what chooses to style itself our good society—heard, first with credulity, and finally with astonishment and ill-concealed envy—that Mrs. Attarby was to appear *in character*, at Mrs. Henderson's *conversazione*, and read one of Shakspeare's plays, to the assembled bigotry, hypocrisy and stupidity, of the capital of quakerism!

The news created an intense sensation. Mrs. Glacée, who was an ardent partisan of Mrs. Valentine, and saw in this a skilful manœuvre on the part of Mrs. Henderson, to throw the grand affair of her patron into the shade, complained bitterly to her friend, Mr. Attarby, permitting his wife to thus go over to the enemy.

“Permit my wife, my dear!” Mr. Attarby had replied, shrugging his shoulders, which was now the only manifestation he allowed himself of his feelings for his wife; “permit her, Mrs. Glacée! Why I see you know nothing whatever of the worthy lady whom I have the honour of calling my wife. I do believe that, had Mrs. Henderson requested her to dance a *pas seul* on the tight-rope, over her dinner-table, she

would have willingly attempted it, had it only been for the pleasure of spiting me. My only hope is in abject submission. I have learned my duty too well, to attempt expressing my wishes in my own household. It would be deemed little short of high treason!"

"Why, then, did you marry her?"

"From much the same motive that Mrs. Henderson has invited her to dinner—the gratification of my vanity. I supposed that it would be a grand thing to carry off a great actress, whom all the world was going mad about,—a grand thing. And so, my dear, it was—a very grand thing, indeed!—altogether too grand for a mere common mortal like myself. I have already made arrangements with a celebrated taxidermist—don't be frightened at the name, it is only a maker of bird-mummies—to have myself stuffed and hung up in a cage, after my death, as a warning to all ambitious young men who are tempted to marry actresses. I mean to have for a legend, 'Died of the Dagger and Bowl, a sacrifice to Melpomene!' Oh, what a precious egregious fool I was! Were it not for the consolations of your friendship, my dear Mrs. Glacée, I should not care how soon I and the taxidermist aforesaid made acquaintance."

"Thank you, Granger, thank you! I am indeed happy at being a solace in your sorrows. But has Mrs. Attarby condescended to inform you of her visit to Mrs. Henderson?"

"Oh, yes. A couple of mornings ago, she entered the breakfast-room through a window opening into

the church-yard, where she had been training an English setter, which she had recently purchased, by making him set the grave-stones. Coming up to the table, where I was eating my solitary breakfast, she said, with such a courtesy as Lady Macbeth used to make to old Banquo,—

“Mr. Attarby, we are honoured with an invitation to dine with Mrs. Henderson on Wednesday next. Is it your pleasure to go?”

“It shall be as you wish, madam,” I replied; “only, I am afraid I shall not be able to come until late, owing to a previous engagement at Mrs. Valentine’s. But you need not wait for me.”

“Thank you, sir!” said my incomparable wife, with another courtesy, but this time short and jerking, like a school-girl’s, that has got a holiday. Then, calling her dog, she leaped out into the graveyard again, and resumed her occupation of ‘flushing’ the graves of old Mr. Topsawyer’s congregation. Oh, she’s a jewel, a real Koh-i-noor! I only wish there were a Crystal Palace, where I could deposit her permanently among the curiosities!”

“Poor Granger! Indeed, you lead a hard life! But I must positively drive you away. There are a thousand arrangements yet to complete for our *matinée*, and I have promised to be with Mrs. Valentine early.”

“Are you, too, getting cruel, Eunice? I came——”
“Hush, you naughty man!” she interrupted, putting her hand on his mouth, and blushing; “I shall of course see you at the concert on Wednesday; but if

you have anything *very* particular to say, I shall be at home to-morrow evening."

"A thousand thanks!" said he, detaining her hand, and kissing it warmly. "I have indeed, something very particular to say to you—do not fail me."

The arrangements at Mrs. Henderson's were conducted without any of the "note of busy preparation," the "sound of hammers closing rivets up," which pervaded the "rival house." Indeed, the cue with our ultra-fashionable establishment, was, to ignore the fact that any "preparations" for anything, were at any time necessary. It was supposed that the household establishment being complete in all its departments, it was of course always ready for any event that could possibly occur. All "preparation," even for heaven, would be considered, among the *élite*, as insufferably vulgar. The apology of that most gentlemanly and aristocratic prince, Charles the Second, to the attendant courtiers, for *being so long in dying*, was in the very highest "good society" tone.

Mrs. Henderson had but one anxiety—to ascertain whether her leading and most influential subjects in the fashionable world, would not openly revolt against meeting an actress; and it was while discussing this point with Miss Jenkins,—who had already engaged herself to Mrs. Valentine, but would have given one of her red ribbons if she could have been at both places at once,—that Mrs. Henderson made the observation which called out Mrs. Attarby's *bon mot* repeated to her husband at the *matinée musicale*.

As for Mrs. Attarby, she passed the morning of her eventful Wednesday, in taking a long ride into the country, dressed in boots and trowsers, and riding *en cavalier*, much to the horror and consternation of the neighbours and inhabitants of that portion of the commonwealth through which her route lay. She was followed by a groom, and her new pet, the setter, whom she intended to give his first trial at live game, to see how far he had profited by his exercises among the dead. The groom carried a light double-barrelled fowling-piece, and rode about two rods behind his mistress. The dog—looking not at all confident that he had got his lesson, and feeling, like all other young *commoners*, that he stood a pretty fair chance of getting plucked—lagged reluctantly behind. Altogether, it was a droll enough procession—yet the amateur Amazon who led it, returned the wondering stare of the rustics and suburbanites, with a look of equal astonishment, as much as to say, “What are all these people wondering at?”

Mrs. Henderson’s fears as to the reception her bold measure for popularity would meet, from the world over which she presided, proved to be entirely groundless—at least among those who had been invited.—Perhaps here and there a family who had expected, but had not received, that honour, might criticise the innovation upon the manners and morals of the chosen people, who were thus defiling themselves with the sinful pleasures of the ungodly. But their censure was scarcely heard beyond their own walls, and never

reached the elevated atmosphere in which Mrs. Henderson moved. In fact, she was not so entirely without precedent, as she had at first supposed. Several of the brethren, who had been seeking for reasons for not declining the invitation, had remembered or discovered that William Penn himself had spent some years in the society of the lords and ladies of King James' court, and in high favour with that faithful subject of the Pope of Rome, and in familiar, daily intercourse with the king himself—living in luxury, keeping his coach and four horses; and in short, with the single exception of the rude vulgarity of keeping his hat on, when well-bred persons took theirs off, living in all respects a gay and luxurious life. With so illustrious an example before them, they felt fully justified in putting off, on this occasion, the severity of their principles, and following the bent of their inclinations.

Mrs. Henderson's saloons were consequently filled. Scarcely an invitation had been declined; and all arrived with a punctuality which showed the interest felt in the unusual character of the expected entertainment. She was neither disappointed nor displeased to learn, as she did by a brief message sent from the store, that her husband had been called out of town on business, and would be absent from the dinner. Such occurrences were not unusual, and the friends, who were no strangers to the differences that existed between the ostensible and real head of the family, were accustomed to dispense with his presence, as a matter

of course, on all occasions of hilarity. Both his wife and his guests, in fact, considered his absence as the very best boon he could bestow upon them, and would have been greatly annoyed and restrained, if, on the present occasion, he had abstained from his usual habit.

The dinner, notwithstanding the brilliant prospect, was destined to be the special mortification of the proud hostess. Mrs. Attarby did not come!

At the last moment, she had sent a note, briefly saying that, having returned too late from the country, to dress in time for Mrs. Henderson's dinner, she must deprive herself of the pleasure of attending it. This, however, would make no difference with the reading, in the evening. If Mrs. Henderson approved, Mrs. Attarby would commence the reading precisely at eight o'clock.

Bitterly chagrined as she was, Mrs. Henderson determined to conceal the disappointment, and make the best of the case that circumstances would permit. She could even say, if any remarks were made on the absence of Mrs. Attarby, that she was not expected to arrive until evening, after dinner was over, and in time for the reading. She therefore sent a polite message of acquiescence to Mrs. Attarby, and returned to the drawing-room, where the guests were waiting dinner, with that constrained and yawning air, (although nobody actually did yawn,) which always pervades that solemn moment even among the best-bred company, unless it is enlivened with wit, and brilliant conversation. As even Mrs. Henderson could evoke

neither of these from the prim-looking ladies and solemn gentlemen, punctiliously arranged about the drawing-rooms, discussing with imperturbable politeness and assiduity, last first-day's "meeting," the melancholy condition of the funds of the Friends' ragged school in Baker street, and the effects of the late tariff on rail-road iron and anthracite coal,—it may well be imagined that the announcement of dinner was a welcome interruption.

Although the company at this dinner actually did, without any pretension or affectation, embrace nearly all the "first families" of the city—there being scarcely a name that did not occur in the early and romantic history of the colony—yet, not only would the affair have been pronounced insufferably dull by a stranger, but it was felt to be so among themselves. The men were either old, or middle-aged, without ever having been young. They might have been inhabitants of the moon, where astronomers tell us there is no atmosphere—so silent, so withered, so joyless, did they appear. They spoke rarely, and in hard, dry monotonous voices; and although all the forms of society were sumptuously observed, and every thing was carried on scrupulously *en règle*, still, one who knew their tastes and habits, would have easily divined that they would have been much more at home, and enjoyed themselves much better, over a plate of warmed-up ham and eggs and a cup of slop coffee, at a shilling eating-house, than in discussing the real *chefs d'œuvres* of Mrs. Henderson's admirable *cuisine*.

As for the ladies, they were more talkative, but not less unsociable, than the men. The trivial details of the household and the nursery—the high prices of marketing, and the tribulations of “help,” formed the staple of their conversation. Prohibited by the habits and customs of their sect, from any but a very moderate indulgence in that staple commodity of conversation, scandal—and avoiding, by mutual consent, the delicate topic of dress, upon which the two ranks of strict and gay Quakers were chiefly at variance—having no common theme of interest, criticism, or enthusiasm, in literature or art—these victims of “exclusive” dullness, were really objects of commiseration. One longed for somebody to throw a summerset, knock down a waiter, or dance a jig among the dishes—merely by way of getting up a sensation!

But at length the dreary dinner drew to a close. Mrs. Henderson had managed to have it understood that Mrs. Attarby had sent word that she would commence her reading precisely at eight; and a general and furtive examination of watches testified the anxiety with which the great event of the evening was awaited. Many of the guests, glad of an opportunity of indulging their curiosity, without an active participation in the sin, were about to listen to Shakspeare and an actress, for the first time in their lives. All had formed extravagant anticipations on the subject, and looked forward with a feeling more nearly approaching excitement, than they had perhaps ever before experienced.

At length, Mrs. Henderson—who had made the apology for the absence of her husband, on the plea of his being out of town on business, rose, and taking the arm of the gentleman on her left, led the way to the drawing-room, the whole company, male and female, following—there being no after-dinner drinking among the gentlemen, as among the world's people. In this eminently "exclusive" circle, all enjoyment of either sex was impartially excluded.

On the way from the dining-table, another general examination of watches took place, producing the satisfactory discovery that it lacked but twenty minutes to the commencement of the evening's performance. This interval was very fairly got through, among the guests, in disposing themselves conveniently, for seeing and hearing; and in the silent enjoyment of the few minutes after dinner in which the stomach appears to be stimulated into a consciousness of its own satisfaction at the offering it has received, and gratefully imparts its own sensations to the other members, organs, and viscera, of the body.

Mrs. Henderson, however, was uneasy. Her dear friend, Mrs. Attarby, had already treated her to one mortifying disappointment—might it not be possible that she had another in store for her? Reflecting on the well-known eccentricity of the actress, she did not deem such a result at all impossible.

But she had done her friend, Mrs. Attarby, great injustice. At precisely eight o'clock, the great actress, accompanied by Mrs. Captain Wallingford, drove to

the door; and going up stairs, and hastily divesting themselves of hoods and shawls entered the drawing-room arm in arm. Mrs. Henderson, who had sent a reluctant invitation to the doubtful Mrs. Captain Wallingford, at Mrs. Attarby's earnest, and almost imperative request—which she had called personally to enforce, the next day after she had received Mrs. Henderson's visit—went forward, smilingly, to receive the new and anxiously expected guest, and her companion.

But, as they approached, the quaker hostess, prepared as she thought she was, for the worst, started, grew very red, and involuntarily drew back. Recovering herself, however, from an embarrassment of which neither of the ladies who had apparently caused it, took the least notice, she led them to the upper part of the room, where, beneath a brilliant chandelier, artfully shaded so as to throw the whole of its light downwards in a brilliant flood, a table had been placed, containing a quarto book—the devil's bible, some of the more strict among the quakers had called it—and a glass of water. Mrs. Attarby, with a stately bow to the company, immediately seated herself, placing her friend, Mrs. Wallingford, on her right hand.

Her appearance occasioned an immediate sensation—or rather commotion—which soon grew to consternation—as the cause of Mrs. Henderson's disturbance on first meeting the two ladies, became revealed to the public view.

Without too far encroaching upon the domains of those dainty historians of scollops and corsages, whose genius and researches illustrate the pages of our fashionable magazines, we must recall to the recollection of our readers, the fashionable style of corsage in which, some years ago, the female bosom did *not* ensconce itself. This fashion, borrowed from the courts of Charles II. and Louis XIV., had a brilliant career in the United States; and many of the virtuous matrons of the present day—and upon their virtue I don't intend the slightest reflection—could not deny that, in their girlhood, they had displayed to the public, in drawing-room, ball and theatre, charms which are now-a-days left to the imaginations of all, save he who is legally constituted the bosom's lord of his elected.

At the time of which we write, this fashion had reached its highest—or rather its lowest—point. But the quaker ladies, whether “gay” or sedate, had resolutely rejected this fashion—I am willing to believe as much from an innate sense of modesty and decency, as from conventional prudery. Many ladies, even among the world's people, stopped *somewhere*, in the dangerous rivalry produced by this fashion—some from modesty, others, like Mrs. Glacée, from necessity; while such ladies as Mrs. Valentine and Mrs. Balder-skin, heedless of every thing but the rivalry of vanity, persevered in the most astounding efforts to *outstrip* one another in the adoption of the latest mode.

Mrs. Attarby—who, it was believed, had given the first impetus to this fashion, by adopting it on the stage—had a grand and imposing, rather than a beautiful, face. Her form, too, was majestic, but somewhat clumsy; and her feet and hands were by no means graceful or delicate. But she possessed an exquisite bust, of such ravishing and harmonious proportions, exactly composed of delicacy and fulness, only fully realized by Greek statues and English women. This was the point upon which her personal vanity concentrated itself; and, thoroughly disdaining every body, she set even probability at defiance, by the manner in which she was dressed, on the present occasion. Her dress was, as was usual with her, of white satin, cut very low on the shoulders, and worn literally without any tucker! The gay and wicked Mrs. Wallingford, who owed the world a spite for its severe commentaries and unfounded criticisms upon herself, gladly fell in with her friend's scheme for punishing the hypocritical prudery of Mrs. Henderson, and at the same time having some splendid fun for themselves, and had strictly followed her friend's example. When two mischievous, reckless, independent, and lovely women set out for a "spree"—it is not so light a matter as a quarter of a yard of chemisette, more or less, that can deter them!

Mrs. Attarby, perfectly grave and dignified, and without seeming to be aware of having excited any particular remark, proceeded to make her usual preparations for commencing her reading—while Mrs.

Wallingford, stuffing her handkerchief into her mouth, grew purple in the face, from suppressed laughter.

At length Mrs. Attarby opened the book, turned over the leaves until she came to *Romeo and Juliet*, and looked round upon her audience. But she saw only their backs! First, the elder ladies, shocked and indignant, stole off quietly, taking their daughters with them; then the middle-aged, both matrons and maids, followed in a body—and lastly the gentlemen, who, as obedient husbands and brothers, did not dare to remain, went out reluctantly, casting many a “longing, lingering look behind.”

Mrs. Attarby paused—gravely waited until the last of the discomfited enemy had disappeared, and then turning with a look of triumph towards her friend, the two women burst into a long and uncontrollable fit of laughter.

Then, rising, and taking her beloved “devil’s bible” under her arm,

“Come, pet,” said she; “we must beat a retreat. We have stormed the polar snows; we must not wait till they burn Moscow about our ears!”

As they made their way to the hall, they saw Mrs. Henderson, sitting in the corner of a sofa, her face covered with a pocket-handkerchief, and weeping with vexation and rage. Pausing, and assuming an attitude of inexpressible grandeur, the great tragedienne exclaimed, in a voice that made thousands thrill, and stretching her arms towards her discomfited enemy—

“Oh, may such purple tears be always shed,
From all that wish the downfall of a house!”

and, with a loud “ha! ha!” the two ladies hurried into the hall, where they found a maid with their wrappers, and rushing into their carriage, drove away.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TWO SISTERS.

MADAME Felice de Saintlieu was the daughter of one of the impoverished but noble houses of the old nobility of France. Its history was that of nearly all the noble families of the *ancienne noblesse*, who had clung to the fortunes of the doomed dynasty of the Bourbon race. The fall of Louis XVI. was attended by the destruction of a nation of noble and princely houses, who, unable to defend the sovereign whom they loved with the same unquestioning faith with which they worshipped their God, knew nor dreamed of any other destiny than to suffer and die for both. The world has never recorded so sublime a catastrophe, as the extinction of a whole race, who represented the chivalry and nobility of ten centuries, from the crowning of Pepin, king of France, in the monastery of St. Denys, by the hands of Stephen the Third—nor have mankind ever beheld a loftier spectacle of the greatness of true devotion, than the stern, silent, and disdainful alacrity with which they accepted, without a murmur, the fate which their sovereign and their queen had been the first to share. It was the cowardly and blood-thirsty mob, drunk with

blood and mad with power, that trembled and shrunk aghast from its own deed—the victory was with the victims.

The grandfather of Madame de Saintlieu had suffered on the scaffold, in 1793; and his wife and infant son had been permitted to escape from France, and join the emigrants, who awaited, on the continent, with fearful forebodings, the course of the storm that was sweeping over France. Under the Empire, she had returned to Paris, where she shortly after died—leaving her son, a young man of seventeen, the sole representative of the ancient name of de Lussac. Having adhered to the cause of the emperor, as the only hope of his country's existence, he distinguished himself in several campaigns; and, at twenty-one, had married the daughter of the Count de Morny, the history of whose family was identical with that of his own. Following the emperor to Moscow, he perished in the Berizena, leaving a widow and two daughters, one of ten years of age, the other an infant.

Madame de Morny, whose fortune was greatly straitened from the political disasters that had overtaken her family, and who mourned her husband with deep and unconquerable grief, withdrew from the world, and dedicated her life to the education of her daughters. Rosalie, the eldest, was a sprightly and beautiful creature; and, as she went with her mother every morning to mass at the church of St. Sulpice, many were the curious glances which she secretly threw about her, at the gloomy and silent old world of St.

Germain, along which they passed. Many, too, were the looks of admiration excited by her fresh and delicate beauty, which were cast upon her by the young students of the Luxembourg and the *quartier latin*. Her mother, wrapped in her devotion, or absorbed in sad memories of the past, saw none of these signs of homage to her daughter's beauty: until one day, when returning from a visit of charity she had been paying in the neighbourhood—for her class, however reduced in fortune or position, never forget the sacred duty to the poor—she found little Felice alone with her nurse. Rosalie was gone; and as she did not return at night-fall, her mother began to feel the most intense anxiety, and was about hastening to the police station, to make inquiries and institute a rigid search, when a *commis-sionnaire* made his appearance at the gate of the hotel, and handing her a letter, immediately disappeared. It was from Rosalie:—

“My Mother”—began the letter—“my own beloved mother! What have I done! I shall never see you more! I am carried far, far away from you! Oh, I love, my mother, I love! and for this love, I have sacrificed all—you—my sister—my name—but *not* my honour, dear mother—no, not that! *He* has sworn that we should be married, as soon as we arrive at — but no, I must not even tell you whither I go—I, too, have sworn! I have left every thing—I have nothing but my picture, with a lock of your hair, and a sunny tendril from the sweet head of Felice, in the locket.

Farewell! Pray for me! Forgive me! *He* says I shall come back to you and Felice—but my heart is heavy with a terrible foreboding. I shall never see you more!

“ROSALIE.”

Rosalie was right—she never beheld her mother or sister again. She had been decoyed away by a young man, a student in the *Ecole de medicine*,—a foreigner, who had been sent to France to obtain his professional education. His family, it appeared, were very rich; for, during his stay in Paris, he had squandered immense sums, in the dissipation of his well-known class, and had exceeded the most reckless of them. Having, however, by the help of a quick and eager intellect, succeeded in acquiring his profession, in the midst of a round of dissipation now grown insipid and tiresome, he was about preparing to leave Paris and return to his native county.

It was at this time that he first saw Rosalie, as she walked by her mother's side, to and from the church of St. Sulpice. Struck by her beauty, he watched, the next day, and the next, and was rewarded each time by another view of that lovely and ingenuous countenance.—Having satisfied himself of the habits and movements of Rosalie and her mother, he became also a regular attendant at early morning mass, in the church of St. Sulpice. Finally, the young girl became aware that a pair of eager eyes waited daily for her entrance, and were fastened in devotion upon her, every instant that she stayed. Then, she just

looked out from the corner of her eyes, to see whether he was always watching her—and then their eyes met—his, beaming with a world of ardent and respectful devotion, and hers cast modestly down, her brief, bright glance expiring amid the blushes of her cheek.

But why prolong the history? Is it not always the same? Is not love, which is the one sole blessing, also the one irresistible temptation, of life? Who has ever conquered that temptation?—None: and he who thinks he has, has not yet endured it—has not yet truly loved. The note that the *commissionaire* had put into Madame de Morny's hands, told the history of her daughter's love—our readers already have divined its catastrophe: she it was, who, dying in want and poverty, alone in a strange land, had left as a sole relic, to her daughter, her mother's picture, with the locks of hair of her aunt and grandmother. This was the history—this was the catastrophe.

And the father of Rosalie!—It is not yet time to speak of him. The days of the sick husband of the gay and dashing leader of fashion,—the weary and suffering invalid, Doctor Valentine, dying amid his unenjoyed wealth—are numbered. The hour draws near.

It is idle and vain to attempt to paint the agony and despair of a mother, for the loss of her first-born—not lost in innocence and death—parted with but for a time, with a sweet certainty of rejoining the loved one, pure and bright, among the angels in

heaven—but lost, in shame and dishonour—lost forever, forever! No hope—nothing but the bitterness of anguish and despair.

Madame de Morny had borne up under the loss of her husband—for it was necessary to live for her children. But now the loving and devoted heart was broken. When every means, that even the ingenuity and the sagacity of the French police could devise, had failed to obtain a trace of her lost daughter—when the aged commissary, almost with tears in his eyes—for he knew well the sad history and noble devotion of the mother thus bereft—told her that there was no longer any hope,—then the poor mother felt that her strength was gone. Not even the deep, appealing eyes of her infant daughter, appealing so trustfully to her, could retain her on the earth. A few months she lingered; and then, having confided Felice to the care of her dearest friend, the companion of her infancy, the sufferer of sorrows similar to her own, she bade farewell to all sorrow, and went to join her husband in heaven.

Madame de Saintlieu, to whom the baby Felice was intrusted, was a woman entirely worthy of so precious a charge. She had but one child—a son, a few years older than Felice, and who had already commenced his education—being intended for the profession of arms. Monsieur and Madame de Saintlieu accepted Felice, instead of the daughter for whom they had prayed in vain. As she grew up, she was so beautiful, so gifted, so noble in nature, and so sweet in disposition, that the hopes of Monsieur and Madame de

Saintlieu were fixed upon the marriage of their son and Felice, as the completion of their happiness.—Their hopes were not disappointed. Adolphe could not help falling desperately in love with the beautiful Felice; and as soon as the young people were of a proper age.—Felice, who was very fond of Adolphe, and had never spoken to another young man in her life, not making any objection,—the marriage was duly celebrated.

For a while they lived very happily; and two lovely girls came to bless their union, and finally to cheer the solitary hours of the young wife and mother, who, although from her talents and conversation—especially her genius for music, and her magnificent voice—was a great favourite in society. However, she was fond of her own home, and preferred the company of her darling daughters, to the most brilliant successes for herself. And besides, a cloud had fallen on her from without. Her husband, who had been at first very fond of her, eventually proved to be a slave to the most despotic of all infatuations—gambling. His father and mother had both died, in the first year of his marriage with Felice, and his fortune was speedily dissipated. Then, came the loss of honour, which gambling brings—the heaviest and most fatal of all its losses. He induced his wife, who readily consented, without an observation, to convert her own fortune into cash, for the purpose of investing it, as he said, in a sure and immensely profitable speculation.

After this was accomplished, Adolphe proposed a

short visit to Spa, as the summer was excessively warm, and the trip would do his wife and the children so much good. He was so affectionate! so attentive!—The happy Felice blushed with pleasure, as she hoped that her husband's senses had come back! They went to Spa—and Monsieur de Saintlieu re-commenced play with more avidity than ever. At first he appeared to be successful, and endeavoured to rally his wife out of the sadness that had again settled upon her. But one morning, when he did not return from his place of resort as usual, at daylight, she grew uneasy. In an hour after, they brought her husband's corse to his home! He had killed himself with a pistol.—In his pocket was found a letter to his wife:

“Felice!—I would not allow a villain to speak to you or our children, without killing him. I am a villain—and I kill myself. I have lied to you—stolen your fortune—robbed you and your children—and now I die like a coward, to escape your forgiveness. If you would curse me, I might, perchance, have courage to live—but I know your angelic nature;—you would forgive me. That I could not endure; and I die.

“I have never loved any but you, Felice—but I am the victim of a demon—gambling—a demon who drags me down before my time. Farewell!”

Thus it was, that deprived at once of husband and fortune, and refusing to become a burden upon any of the wealthy friends, who immediately pressed round

her, and overwhelmed her with offers of friendship and protection, conveyed in the most delicate and considerate manner. But she was firm. Having been suddenly called upon to act for herself, she gave a glance of anxiety, not unmingled with a proud self-reliance, at her children; and returning immediately to Paris, she closed up the affairs of her husband's and her own estates; procured some letters of introduction from sources whose names were of authority in every country of the world—and, with five thousand francs, and her sister's farewell letter to her mother, she embarked for America—that land to which the broken-hearted Rosalie had come to die, and where it had been written, was to be accomplished the destiny of the two sisters.

CHAPTER XIX.

BLACK MAIL.

ARTHUR WILMAR had not forgotten the permission to cultivate the acquaintance of his new friend, Madame de Saintlieu. His sister Ellen, who had been immediately taken charge of by Dr. Felton, still continued feeble, but had so far recovered from the effects of her recent alarm as not to be in any immediate danger. She had held a long and confidential communication with the worthy doctor, in which she had confided to him, without reserve, a faithful account of the strange and terrible adventures of the night of Rosalie's death. The doctor advised her not to relate what she had seen to any one, not even to her family. Arthur and her sisters were merely told of the infamous deception which had been practised upon her by Mrs. Anthony, and that she had succeeded in escaping in safety and uninjured from the diabolical plot against her. The doctor thought he saw in this affair, the means, if rightly managed, of at least compelling Henderson to restore the fortune of the Wilmars, which he did not now doubt had been wrongfully taken from them by the

quaker. To effect this, however, the greatest caution was absolutely necessary, lest Henderson should be put on his guard, and should be able to take some means of thwarting the ends of justice.

Since that fearful night, both Henderson and young Ingraham had remained in a state of constant trepidation and alarm. Captain Butler—who, it will be recollected, knew nothing of Ingraham, in connexion with the part he had played in the transaction at Mrs. Anthony's, had given his testimony on the coroner's inquest, in general terms, upon the manner in which the body of Rosalie had been found—the house being entirely unoccupied, having evidently been suddenly abandoned by its living inmates, upon the completion of the murder. But he took the coroner aside, and informed him confidentially of his having seen Ira Henderson leave the house a few minutes before the murder was discovered, and of having measured the traces of two bloody footsteps, which he had discovered at the head of the stairs. The coroner agreed with him in opinion, that it was best not to give these facts to the public at present, as it was highly important to secure the keeper of the house, who had frequently been seen, and could be recognised by the Captain.

As for Henderson, the Mayor having been informed of the circumstances, detailed a policeman to watch the house and store of Henderson, without letting himself be seen, and, unobserved, to dog the footsteps of Henderson, wherever he went. The policeman was furnished with a warrant, issued upon the affidavit of

Captain Butler, and instructed to arrest Henderson, the moment he attempted to leave the city, but otherwise to leave him unmolested. It was believed that, by this course, the guilty parties would be thrown off their guard, and that Mrs. Anthony would return to seek an interview with her patron—when both could be arrested together.

The policeman Wilkins, who had discovered the miniature and the anonymous letter, kept his own counsel—determining to make use of the clue which they furnished him, for his own advantage. From the coroner's inquest, he had hurried to the street where Ingraham lived, and had patiently watched the door of Mrs. Valentine's house, until Ingraham, towards the middle of the afternoon, opened the door and looked cautiously out. Seeing no one, and supposing that he had succeeded in getting home without having been observed, he came down the steps, and walked towards Chesnut street, trying to assume his usual careless swagger. His face was haggard, however, and his eyes were wild and blood-shot; and descending the steps of the first oyster cellar he encountered, he went up to the bar and called for brandy and water. While waiting to receive change for a piece of money he had laid down in payment, he observed a rough-looking, sinister-eyed man, who came down the steps, and leaning familiarly against the counter, very close to where Ingraham stood, said,

“ You may just as well take out another fip, Johnny

—Mr. Ingraham has just asked me to take a drink with him.”

The young man started back; and forgetting for a moment every thing but the horror of being treated in so familiar and impertinent a manner, by a coarse, vulgar fellow, exclaimed,

“Who are you? Bar-keeper, give me my change—I pay for only my own drink.”

“Yes you will, though, honey!” said the other, looking up at Ingraham, and laying his hand familiarly on his shoulder. “Come now,” he continued, as the young man shrunk from him with a gesture of disgust; “don’t be so squeamish. I warrant, now, if I was a young and handsome gal, dead or alive, you wouldn’t be so afraid of my coming near you!”

“What do you mean, rascal?” exclaimed Ingraham, growing pale.

“Oh, nothing—nothing!” said the man; “but maybe you’ll reconsider that motion not to pay for my drink?”

“If you have anything to say to me,” said Ingraham, trembling in every limb, “say it. I don’t know you.”

“No, but you will though—all in good time! Come, Johnny, hand up the Monongahale, and give the gentleman his change.”

Johnny, handing up the bottle, looked at Ingraham, as if to know what to make of the affair; and, receiving an impatient nod, dropped the extra tip into the drawer, and went to opening oysters.

"And now, Mr. Edward Ingraham," continued the young man's new acquaintance; "*I have* got something very particular to say to you; and if you'll step in here, we shall understand ourselves in a very little time." So saying, he pointed to one of the little stalls into which one side of the cellar was divided.

"If the gentleman's got anything to say to you," said the bar-keeper, "you'd better go into that there little room behind. The stalls ain't safe."

"Right, Johnny," said the man, leading the way, and turning up the gas, which, in this subterranean abode, was kept burning all day.

By this time, Ingraham had become alarmed; and from the mystery and importance attached by the stranger to his communication, he could scarcely doubt that it had reference to the death of Rosalie. It must be remembered that, although not actually guilty of that deed, yet he had contemplated it as a probability, and all the other facts of the case were of such a nature as, if known, to directly implicate him. It was with the greatest trepidation, therefore, that he entered this dark cell-like room, and inquired of the uncerimonious stranger, what he wanted.

"Now don't let's go too fast, Mr. Edward Ingraham, in this here business. Law, I know you well enough, Mr. Ingraham—though perhaps you don't know me. I've seen you these several years past, going it on the high horse, at Pudding Sall's, and Billy Bender's and down at the Dead House, late

o'nights. I always had a sort of tender regard for you, just as if, some time or another, I could do something for you; and now that time has come."

He looked steadily at Ingraham, who said nothing. So the other went on.

"You see, Mr. Ingraham, that there murder down at Mrs. Anthony's—what's the matter, Mr. Ingraham? I declare, you look as if you was a-going to faint! Well—you see that there murder has made a terrible excitement. All the papers are down on the police, and the mayor, and the governor, and on every body generally, for not being more 'efficient' in discovering the 'dastardly perpetrators'—yes, that's it, I've got it in my pocket—'dastardly perpetrators' of this deed. But they give the most particular jessié to the poor policeman—as if a policeman could scare up a murderer or so, whenever he wanted to!"

"Well, well," said Ingraham, trying to look fierce, and getting up as if to go. "What's all this to me?"

"Oh, nothing, Mr. Edward Ingraham, nothing at all—but my story will get more interesting in a minute. Now you see, supposing Mr. Ingraham—I say, just supposing—that I had a friend in the police, who happened to be near Cherry street last night—or this morning—and who saw a young gentleman, by the name of Ingraham, running as fast as he could, through the streets, in the direction from the house where the murder was committed? And then supposing, furthermore, that this same policeman came

across the captain of the beat, and helped him break into the house, and discover the body; and while the captain was examining the footsteps round a puddle of blood in the hall, supposing this policeman had went boldly into the room itself, and found on the table, a little picture of a woman, and an open letter?"

"That letter! I never thought of that!" groaned Ingraham, utterly thrown off his guard, as the recollection of this terrible fact flashed upon him.

"I supposed not, Mr. Ingraham," said the man, in imperturbable coolness—"and that's what I told my friend the policeman. Well now, to begin where I left off. Supposing this policeman ain't a bad kind of a fellow, and don't want to give gentlemen any extra trouble. Still, you know, he hain't got no time to admire pictures of strange ladies; and he thinks he had better sell this here one, as he's got. Now, supposing you wanted to buy a picture of that there kind—I say only supposing, you know—what do you think you might be willing to give for it, with the letter, you know, thrown in? But perhaps you ain't fond of pictures, Mr. Ingraham?"

"Oh, yes I am," stammered Edward, "very fond. I think I should like the one you mention; and if a thousand dollars"—

"Oh, tain't enough, Mr. Ingraham—I know my friend never would sell it for that. You see, pictures is very high, owing to there being so many Crystal Palaces a building, and I'm sure that my friend

wouldn't think of taking less than five thousand—with the letter thrown in, you know. And in fact, that's just the sum he wants for it; and he's a real obstinate fellow, and if he don't get it by to-night at seven o'clock, he'll go and leave the picture and letter at the mayor's office for public inspection. It'll be his duty, you know!"

"Will you bring the articles here this evening? You and you alone. I remember you, now—you are a policeman. Come alone, or I'll have nothing to do with you."

"Oh, I'll be alone—I ain't afraid of no such a covie as you, Mr. Edward Ingraham: I always carry's a barker about me, that's good for at least six of you! Good day—I'll be punctual—be sure you are! Good day!"

And thus it was that Mr. Edward Ingraham fell into the hands of the Philistines.

CHAPTER XX.

COLLECTING EVIDENCE.

NOTWITHSTANDING that the newspapers had so violently attacked the police, the mayor, and the authorities generally, that a stranger unacquainted with the blessings of a free press would have been forced to the conclusion, either that the authorities were murderers, or the editors blackguards, yet the police and the mayor had really done their duty, as far as they could, and were still doing it.

But it was deemed, as we have stated, of the greatest importance to the proper elucidation of the case, that Mrs. Anthony should be arrested; and the only hope of this, was to keep all their movements profoundly secret, and allow her, as well as every body else concerned, to suppose that the affair had blown over.

The next day after Dr. Felton received the history of the affair from Helen, he went to the mayor's office, and begged a private audience of that functionary, on important business. The mayor, who knew Dr. Felton's reputation, as a physician in high standing, im-

mediately admitted him, and received him with great respect.

"I have come, sir," said the doctor, "to make you an important communication respecting the recent murder in Cherry street. I only became aware of the facts yesterday—and I required some time to consider what was the wisest and most proper course to pursue. I have now decided; and if you have time, I will make my communication now."

"Certainly, sir—the case is a most important as well as mysterious one. I am entirely at your service."

The doctor then related the circumstances, as they had been given him, in full, by Helen—having first exacted a promise from the mayor, that he would leave the task of inducing the witness to appear and testify, if it were necessary, entirely to him.

The mayor listened attentively to the narration—especially to that part which related to the picture and the letter. Then, requesting Doctor Felton to wait a minute, he rang a little bell that stood on the table, and a messenger looked in.

"Send Captain Butler to me."

The captain came in.

"Captain Butler," said the mayor; "did you not tell me that policeman Wilkins was with you when you discovered the murder in Cherry street?"

"Yes—he went into the bed-room while I was measuring the footsteps in the hall."

"Will you have the kindness to bring him in with you?"

The captain went out, and the mayor observed to Dr. Felton ;

"I have reason to suspect that fellow Wilkins—he is an old stool-pigeon, and has doubtless concealed the miniature and the letter, for the purpose of frightening Ingraham into giving him a large sum for them. I hope we shall not be too late."

Captain Butler now returned with Wilkins.

"Mr. Wilkins," said the mayor, "I understand that you have a letter and a picture in your possession, which you found in the room of the young woman murdered in Cherry street, and that you forgot to mention this circumstance, either to Captain Butler, or the coroner, in your evidence at the inquest.—Is that so ?"

Wilkins, who knew the inflexible character of the man he had to deal with, quailed before his steady, piercing glance.

"Yes, your honour," he finally said ; "you see I thought it best not to make things public at once, and so I thought I would tell your honour about the letter and the picture, in private."

"Quite right, Mr. Wilkins—I approve your discretion. You may now hand these articles over to me."

"But, your honor, would n't it be better for me to keep them till the trial, you know"—

"Oh, I will see that they are forthcoming at the proper time—you may safely entrust them to me."

Wilkins saw that his fancied fortune from the possession of these invaluable relics was fading into air.

He had not yet come to any understanding with Ingraham, as his avarice induced him to demand the five thousand dollars, and still to keep possession of the articles. This Ingraham had positively refused. He was willing to hand over the money agreed upon, if Wilkins would perform his part of the contract.—Otherwise, he might do his worst.

Wilkins was now disgusted with himself for having refused, and only wanted to gain an hour's time, to close with Ingraham at once, pocket the money, and make his escape.

"Certainly, you honour," he replied; "just as your honour pleases. I left the things at home—and I'll bring them down this evening, as it's just my hour for going on duty."

"Oh, never mind! Sit down there, Mr. Wilkins, and write a note to your wife, to send the things—I'll have it taken to your house."

Seeing himself fairly caught, and cursing his own avarice, that had defeated itself, he suddenly recollected that he *had* the articles about him; and, fishing them up, very reluctantly, from the bottom of his pocket, he handed them over to the mayor.

"You can go on duty now, Mr. Wilkins," said his honour.

"Is it not probable," said the mayor, "that the girl left some other letters or papers, which would serve as a clue, at least, to her identification? Besides, there is the dagger—what has become of that? Captain Butler is the house still in your charge?"

"Yes—here is the key which I had made for the front door."

"Well, then, let us three go and make a further examination of the premises."

"What is here?" said Captain Butler; who in handling the miniature, had accidentally touched the secret spring of the locket. Two locks of hair were thus disclosed—one a dark, rich brown, the other, a small, light curl, evidently from the head of an infant, and answering exactly to the sister's description of "a sunny tendril." These lay upon a piece of white paper, on the back of which was written,

"Ma mère et ma sœur.

"*Paris*, 18 ——— "ROSALIE DE MORNY."

"Ah!" said the mayor, "we at least know the name of the poor girl's mother. We must immediately write to France. This will make our immediate visit to the house unnecessary. I will send for you, this evening or to-morrow, when we shall both, perhaps, have a little more leisure."

"Excuse me for one moment longer," said the doctor, as Captain Butler left the room. "I wish to consult you upon this point. It is true that Ira Henderson is innocent of the death of the poor girl—and also that Ingraham cannot justly be charged with it—though his conduct led to it; and both he and Henderson are as great villains as if they had perpetrated the deed together. It seems certain that the girl had been seduced or betrayed by Ingraham—and it is certain that Henderson contemplated the same crime

against Helen Wilmar. Now, I have every reason to believe that Henderson, who was Mr. Wilmar's executor, defrauded his family out of the whole of his fortune—and it was only yesterday I discovered that Helen Wilmar, who was engaged to Ingraham when the blow came, of the loss of their fortune, and when he brutally abandoned her, is now dying for love of him."

"I remember the two circumstances well. Proceed, my dear sir."

"Now, such being the case, and both these men," resumed the doctor, "being great criminals, I put it to you, as a man and a magistrate, whether we have not a right to make use of these circumstances; and, since we can no longer help the dead, to restore happiness to a wronged and worthy family, and peace to a gentle and broken heart?"

"I see your meaning my dear doctor, and it is as acute, as it is benevolent and just. We undoubtedly have a right to act in the manner you propose, for an unquestionably good and just object, and where no injustice can accrue to other parties—which I take it, is the case in the present affair. I undertake to say so much, as a magistrate and a lawyer."

"Well, then, we are agreed—but what is the best manner of proceeding?"

"Why, if we do not obtain some satisfactory information of Mrs. Anthony, to-day, I shall wait no longer—besides, we are not in need of her, now, except as a victim of justice. Meanwhile, I will have both

Henderson and Ingraham apprehended on the same charge, and tried as accessories in the murder. The evidence we possess, without the explanatory and harmonizing testimony of Miss Wilmar, would undoubtedly be sufficient to hang them both."

"That shows the danger of relying on circumstantial evidence."

"Yes, only—you will smile at my superstition, doctor—but there is a wide and deep-seated belief among judges and lawyers, that there is a providence in all these things, and that the innocent are never permitted to suffer death, for the crime of murder."

"But, there are well-authenticated cases on record, are there not? And besides, we know that the innocent *do* suffer things less than death; and if providence prevents the greater injustice, why not the lesser?"

"It is true," replied the mayor, musing; "there is no logic for it—and yet, I believe it. Besides, how know we that many things which we call unjust suffering, are not either just punishments for some unrevealed sin, or perhaps positive blessings in the shape of suffering?"

"What sin can you suppose this poor young girl to have committed, worthy of death?"

"Ah, my dear doctor, do you call that death a punishment? Child as she was, her blood has washed out her sins, and she will be received among the angels. A few years more, and she would have become, perhaps, a demon, such as the devils themselves would

shudder at. It is better to leave it all to providence, and to believe devoutly in him. But meanwhile, so far as we have facts before us, it is our duty to act. I will consider on the best means of laying the alternative of justice and restitution before Henderson and Ingraham, in such a way as not to wound the delicacy of Miss Helen or her family. I will see you again to-morrow, and then I shall have my plans arranged, and ready to submit to you."

The doctor took his leave; and the mayor, again ringing his bell, sent for Captain Butler, with whom he had a long interview.—

The captain then went out; and the now mollified newspapers, the next morning, announced that Ira Henderson and Edward Ingraham, had been arrested for the murder of Mademoiselle Rosalie de Morny. They revelled in the details of the affair—described the furniture of the house, the locality and general appearance of the street, with a particular history of the corner grocery, which was erected in the time of the Swedes; inserted a programme of the bed-room where "the unfortunate young lady encountered her distressing fate"—with a portrait of the deceased, from a daguerreotype, taken on the spot by "our enterprising fellow townsman, George Washington Skylight, Esq.," and a correct view of the miniature, and a *fac simile* of the letter, "recovered by that faithful and energetic public officer, Wilmington Wilkins, Esq." They puffed the police generally,—they puffed the mayor and Captain Butler, particularly; and they

were very severe upon the character of poor Mrs. Anthony, who was not there to defend herself, and so was made the general scape-goat of the misdoings of everybody. In fact, the reporters and the news-boys had a glorious time of it, and fully realized the old proverb, that "it is an ill wind that blows nobody good."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FLOWERING OF A HEART.

THERE are days and hours, of mingled storm and sunshine, in which hearts as well as plants, gathering to themselves the strength of their existence, burst suddenly into bloom. Yesterday, the germ lay dark and silent, folded in the unformed and protecting leaves: to-day, it is expanded in all its loveliness, and fills the air with the intoxicating perfume of its beauty. This culminating hour had come to the soul of Arthur Wilmar. The storms, the sunshine, through which he had just passed, had ripened all the powers and capacities of his nature. His vague dreams, his wild longings and aspirations, had taken form, and diffused around him an atmosphere that thrilled every nerve with a new sense of life and power. He wandered no longer in darkness, questioning the dim and distant stars, of all those mysteries of fate and life, which were yet folded and silent within him. Day had dawned—the sun had arisen—and far away on every side stretched the boundless horizon of hope. At first, the objects and images of his new world were confused

and undistinguishable to his newly awakened senses. But gradually, as his vision grew more calm, they arranged themselves in harmonious perspective, and filled his soul with the divine joy of beauty. Art had now an object, ambition an aim. The airy visions of his youthful dreams came trooping by, shedding music upon the air, and dazzling him with their splendour. And amid them all, there was a *presence*, that informed them with a sympathy and a meaning, that made his heart thrill, as oh, how often he had hoped that it would one day thrill! This glorious presence, which seemed to be repeated on every side—which every sound, every breath, called up, smiling before him—was the earnest, tender face of Madame de Saintlieu, with its clear, steady eyes looking into the depths of his heart, as the sunbeams penetrate the waters.

The anxiety occasioned by Helen's absence, and her subsequent illness, had for a moment overclouded his newly expanded horizon. But the lost was found, the loved one was restored to their tender love and care. She still suffered much, and seemed to be growing weaker. But Dr. Felton spoke encouragingly—talked cheerfully of young ladies naturally taking cold, when they went rushing about the streets at four o'clock in the morning—and spoke confidently of her "coming round" all right again, in a little while.—Helen smiled, as if she believed it all; and Arthur, kissing her tenderly, and consigning her to the care of her sister, resumed his daily avocations, which he had for some time too much neglected.

It was some days before he would remind himself that Madame de Saintlieu had given him a cordial permission to visit her, and gained courage to act upon that recollection. His heart beat, as he fully believed heart had never beat before, as he rang the bell at Mrs. Loftus', and inquired for Madame de Saintlieu.

He found her busily occupied in mending some guipure lace, whose heavy web of arabesque, was growing into shape, beneath her fingers, as she united the broken threads, and restored the rich and antique pattern to its original symmetry.

There are some periods of life, in which the excited imagination draws poetry from the most ordinary circumstances.

"I could almost think," said he, taking a seat near the low sofa where, by her side, she had spread out the figures of the lace which she had already completed; "that I see Arachne herself before me, weaving the web of some poor mortal's destiny, doomed to go round and round forever in its inextricable meshes."

"Arachne is only a spider, in these modern days of commonplace; and the practical brush of the unrelenting housemaid sweeps all her dainty woofs away, without even stopping to see that they are beautiful. But it *is* beautiful, this old lace—one of the few remaining works of human hands, that tell their story to the heart."

"Tell me the story."

"Oh, you know that this lace was all made by the

nuns of the middle ages—I don't mean middle-aged nuns! And so laborious was the task, and so slow its progress, that often the altar-piece, commenced by some young devotee, escaped from a world that had too soon pressed upon her young heart, was not finished till long after the fingers of her who had begun it, were mouldering in the grave. One can understand the mysterious awe with which her successor took up the unfinished web, and went on with the suspended task, of her whose labours were finished forever."

"Imagination can invest the most insignificant object with an infinite interest. What should it not, then, confer upon the soul itself?"

"No—the soul is its master: she needs a mightier magician than imagination, before she puts forth her immortal beauties."

"And the name of that magician is ——,"

"Oh, we will call no names!" said Felice, laughing, and blushing a little. "Just now you likened *me* to a spider; I don't know what you would say of poor little cupid!"

"Is he one of the good genii, who delights to make his votaries happy?—or is he of the naughty ones, who amuse themselves by enjoying the sufferings of those who have rashly invoked them?"

"You must ask a heart that has loved: I cannot answer that question," said Felice, with a little impetuous motion, as if she were almost about to be offended.

Wilmar's face grew crimson, and he was silent.

"Nay," said she, after a pause, seeing his confusion ; "I have no right, after all, to refuse answering questions—I have promised to be your teacher ; and so I will do as I suspect many other teachers are in the habit of doing—answer at random. Love carries a goblet filled with the true elixir of life—those who quaff it without question of its qualities, and while the foam still dances on the surface, can never be again truly unhappy, for they have strengthened their souls with the anticipated joys of heaven. But they who stop to taste, and judge, and test the flavour of the draught, find it but an insipid, or a burning poison. There's my allegory—what think you of it?"

"Love is, then, like art—jealous of rivalries or reservations. Do they destroy one another?"

"Not necessarily—but because two natures are rarely found, in contact, capable of a perfect devotion to both love and art. Such a union would be a practical miracle. Such love would be as sublime as art—such art, as gentle and child-like as love. It is this combination of which angels are created."

"You ennoble both love and art—but you make me despair of either!"

"Of art, surely not, my dear Mr. Wilmar. You have already established your claim to the possession of that moiety of a perfect existence. The other will come."

"Oh, your words are inspirations! How would I glory in being worthy of your teaching! Your every idea seems to complete and make intelligible to me,

some vast expressionless want that has ever been struggling in my bosom!"

"Do you know that this is very exquisite flattery, Mr. Wilmar—and that flattery is forbidden in the world of true art?"

"And in the world of love?"

"Oh, no—there can be no flattery between lovers—because neither language, looks, nor action, can ever express all the perfections of a loved one, as they actually appear to the lover's eyes."

From conversations like this—and having once yielded to the delicious emotions which her presence excited in him—having abandoned himself without reserve to that sweet empire which young love establishes over the heart—his visits were soon almost daily repeated—they would revert to the exercise and discussion of the beautiful art in which they both found the highest happiness. Music is the most seductive and dangerous of all means of communication between two congenial natures. It symbolizes all things, and boldly expresses all things, even those of which the bashful lover dares scarcely dream in words—and yet it ever remains pure and spiritual. Musicians, and those who know what music is, will feel and understand this—but to others it would be impossible to explain it, in intelligible language.

With her quick apprehension, and her knowledge of the world, Madame de Saintlieu could not remain ignorant of the nature of the influence she was exerting unconsciously over Wilmar, although she took care not

to let him become aware that she had made the discovery. She had courageously and honestly examined her own heart, and she found there only a deep interest, a tender and affectionate friendship, and a sense of exquisite pleasure, untinctured with the sympathy of a mutual passion, in the fresh and delicate devotion to her, which grew daily more and more deep and absorbing—and yet, as if afraid of itself and its own hopes, more and more reserved and respectful. She did not, as yet, love Arthur—nor was she fully satisfied that the feelings with which he regarded her, were anything more than the gratitude of a sensitive and fine nature, to one who had been the means of awakening new powers and new ideas in himself. She was charmed with the freshness, the sincerity, of his character—with his unselfish genius, so different from the exacting vanity and egotism of the artists and brilliant men of society—and she was inexpressibly flattered by the reverent and delicate devotion, rather than respect, with which he regarded her.

She was not, however, quite convinced of the strength or consistence of his character. His early seclusion from the world, and the lack of that perfect self-possession which can be only attained by the regular habit of mixing in general yet refined society,—the benefits of which she fully possessed, without being herself aware of it—somewhat misled her in her estimate of Wilmar's character, and caused her, in some respects, greatly to under-rate him; while at the same

time, she sincerely admired him, and felt the greatest interest in him.

In a word, she feared that he was deficient in moral stamina; while this appearance proceeded simply from a too insignificant sense of himself, and a feeling akin to worship for her. Underneath all this, too, heaved the deep fountains of passion, which bathe with their lava fires, the simplicity of a first love. He did not dare to boldly analyze his feelings—to own to himself that he was pining for love of this glorious creature—and to stretch out his arm and seek to grasp that which he desired. There was, in his eyes, a kind of sacrilege in this, of which he dared not be guilty. And besides what right had he to expect success?—and, should he be rejected, how could he be sure that she would again admit him to the present delicious footing of intimacy, and unreserved intercourse of thought, without which he felt that life would be worthless to him?

And then there was another thought—a thought that gave him the keenest misery—a thought upon which he could not bring himself to dwell, but shrunk from it, like the coward that he was. Yet, spite of himself, it would often obtrude itself upon him. What if she loved another! He only knew, from some casual phrases he had heard from Mrs. Loftus and Mrs. Valentine, that she was a widow, and that she had come to America for the purpose of supporting herself and her children, by the practice of those accomplishments which, in other days, had embellished her own brilliant circle of private society. In that circle many must have loved

her—many in comparison with whom he felt how unworthy and insignificant he must appear. No—he dared not hope; and all he ventured to anticipate was, that their present intercourse might not be broken up.

Modest lover! Satisfied with so little—and yet burning with desire to have all—to press her to your bosom—to feel her heart beat against yours—to revive that fainting and palpitating frame, with the full and intoxicating draught of love! Yes—oh, yes! you would exhaust Cupid's foaming goblet to the last drop, and still hold up your thirsty and unsatisfied lips! And yet you coolly reason the case with your very reasonable self, and conclude that you must continue to be satisfied with these long, playful, and pleasant interviews in Mrs. Loftus' somewhat cold and stately drawing-room—with that creature, whose every movement and look, whose every smile and accent, sends the blood boiling through your veins!—seated quietly in her little sofa, surrounded with her allegorical guipure, or with the newspapers,—or playing with her children—while you, hat in hand, sit stiffly perched upon the edge of one of Mrs. Loftus' old-fashioned chairs—playing propriety with all your might, and with most intense self-mastery preventing yourself from snatching her up in your arms, rushing with her through the streets—into the forest—any where, somewhere, where you may throw yourself at her feet, and implore her to take pity on you!

Well—there is one comfort! No matter how absurdly a man in love may be constrained to think and

reason, he generally *acts* in the most straightforward and sensible way—that is, as soon as his love has risen to that point deserving the name of a genuine passion.

And so, one sunny day, having firmly settled himself in the conviction that the policy so much easier for diplomatists than lovers to pursue—a masterly inactivity—was his only hope at least for the present—Arthur went to rehearse with Madame de Saintlieu a little song which he had been composing at her request. She had given him the words in manuscript, having fished them out of the depths of an old portfolio. He liked not at all the look of them—they were written in a bold, masculine hand—and he had grown as jealous and as unreasonably so, as a young husband at the first season with his wife at Saratoga. So he had been in any thing but a good humour, while writing the song, and had dashed in two or three astounding cross-grained chords, at the close of the refrain, not at all in keeping with the tender sentiment of the words.

“It is certainly a fine melody,” said she, running it over; “but something too sad and energetic for the sentiment. And these horrid chords at the end—why, I should think you had been practising for a new witches’ dance!”

“Yes—laugh at me as much as you please—I deserve it all, and a thousand times as much more. I am a fool—and you are quite right in laughing at and despising me. I despise myself!”

“Why, Mr. Wilmar, what is the matter? What

have I said to wound you? I did not mean any harm—I would not laugh at you, or pain you in any way, for the world—indeed I would not. Pray forgive me!” and she bent over him, and looked into his face with such tenderness in those wondrous eyes, such sincerity and sympathy, and affection, in her gentle face, that he was carried out of himself. He suddenly caught her hand—he pressed it to his burning lips—he drew her towards him, murmuring in a broken and weeping voice,

“Oh, Felice! Pardon me! I am mad! But I love you! oh, I love you!”

She did not start; but she gently drew her hand away, and stood erect before him. There was an ineffably sad and yet tender expression on her face, and her eyes seemed as if they would have filled with tears, had not a strong will kept them imprisoned in her heart.

He looked up pleadingly.

“Oh, forgive me! Do not send me away from you I will never offend you again!”

“Poor child!” murmured Felice, in a soft, caressing tone; “poor Arthur! He has not offended me—see, I am not angry!” and taking his head in her hands, she laid the burning and throbbing temple on her bosom. There, on that strong, truthful, and noble heart, the poor boy’s paroxysm subsided, and it seemed that a portion of its own serenity and repose had entered into his brain.

At length he looked up. He had not at all misin-

terpreted her spontaneous action : he did not dream of presuming upon it : he understood it for just what it was—the affectionate caress of a sister, of a dear friend, who loved and felt for him.

“Can you forgive my violence?” said he.

“There is nothing to forgive. I am honoured by your love, Arthur. But I do not accept it, as you would now have me do. You have not sufficiently tried your own heart. Many other emotions may have combined to deceive your inexperience. For myself, I have the profoundest affection for you, which, under favourable circumstances, may ripen into love—no, no ! I do not say it will—but it may, and I love no other, nor have I had a thought of loving, since the father of my children died. It is an idea with which I should not easily familiarize myself. Watch yourself—study yourself and your own sensations, carefully. Remember, too, my dear Wilmar, that we are somewhat mismatched in years—though loving hearts are ever young. Think well of it ; and let this interview be as if it had never been, until we both are impelled, by a mutual desire, to renew the remembrance of it. Will you promise me all this?”

“Yes, yes—all, anything—so that you do not drive me away from you !”

“On the contrary, we are better friends than ever ; for whatever may be our future, at least we need not deprive ourselves of that greatest and truest of all consolations, next to love itself—a faithful and fervent friendship.”

"Oh, bless you!"

"Are you calm and happy, now?"

"Yes—calm and happy—very calm and happy. I will never be mad again."

"Come, then, let us try the song—and cut out those horrid chords! You really were not jealous of that scrap of paper, and those verses, you absurd boy!"

"Oh, I was—frightfully jealous!"

"But of whom?"

"Whoever it was that wrote them, and gave them to you!"

"Well, I will tell you all about it. They are the words of a Venetian serenade, and were transcribed for me at Milan, by an old gentlemen of sixty, who had a wife as old as himself, of whom he was devotedly fond, and two daughters considerably older than I was. The words are a translation from the pretty Venetian dialect, which I understand but imperfectly. There! I have given you an explanation, which you might have sighed for in vain, if you really were my lover! Are you satisfied?"

"Oh, Felice!—I dare not despair!—God cannot have created me for so much misery, as not to make you love me!"

"Meanwhile," said she, with a frank and playful smile; "let us sing my old friend's Venetian serenade."

Sebastian Bach would have got some new ideas of counterpoint, if he had been there to listen to the extemporized accompaniment of the young pianist!

CHAPTER XXII.

OUR TWO YOUNG LADIES.

WE really must beg pardon of the young ladies—not only of our own two special young ladies, who are at this moment putting on their “things” for the purpose of promenading through Chestnut street and this chapter—but of all the charming class of young ladies, who may do us the honour of accompanying them on this expedition—for having so long given them the go-by. But having now succeeded in getting the mob of hum-drum characters who form the staple of our story, into a pretty general state of uneasiness—some in love, some in jail, and all in some sort of a dilemma, such as novel-readers especially delight in—we will leave them to coolly reflect upon their past lives and future prospects, and offer our arm to the young ladies—for whom, let us whisper in their ear, our book is exclusively written.

Miss Jemima Jenkins, whom we last saw flourishing like an immense parti-coloured dahlia, at Mrs. Valentine’s *matinee musicale*, was by no means pleased with

the comparatively obscure part which she had taken in that interesting ceremony. In fact, owing to her soft-heartedness, in following what now appeared to her the malicious advice of Mrs. Henderson, she had for once, found herself too conspicuous; and had, as we have already mentioned, hidden herself behind a door, where she lay—to use the patriotic expression of Mrs. Balderskin—buried in the American flag, throughout the whole of that occasion. Nor, while thus reposing in a state of inactivity as disagreeable as it was unusual to her, could she avoid hearing several allusions to her costume, not at all complimentary, observing the “nods, and becks and wreathed smiles,” which passed from one to the other of her acquaintances, upon her novel and somewhat astounding style of habiliment.

Now, Miss Jenkins—although she was strictly a young lady, not being yet married—had arrived at that age when the milk of human kindness generally dries up or curdles in the human bosom: and, although we of course cannot undertake to say what was the exact consistence of that delicate commodity on the present occasion, yet we do know, that Miss Jenkins left the drawing-room of her friend Mrs. Valentine, in a state of high dudgeon; and we are enabled to state, on the authority of her maid, whom we bribed with a new bonnet into our service—that upon reaching her own room, that sacred sanctuary of virgin innocence was startled with the reverberation of several of the smartest and most piquant feminine oaths then

current in good society, and which apparently proceeded from the lips of its mistress.

However, having speedily divested herself of her unfortunate red and blue gown, wondering, as she now looked at it hanging over a chair, how she could ever have been so egregious a dupe as to have put it on, she divested herself of the other spoils of beauty, and got into bed, where she dreamed all night that she was a fourth of July procession, and saw herself carried by, on a platform, ornamented with red and blue flags, and borne by twenty-four firemen, dressed in red shirts and sky-blue trowsers.

The next day was destined to bring a "pain extractor" to the damsel's wounded vanity, in that most acceptable of all shapes—the news of the misfortune of others. Scarcely had she risen, and from the scattered materials and occult mysteries of the dressing-table, reconstituted herself that mortal personification of loveliness known to men as Jemima Jenkins; thrust the offending red and blue dress into a dark closet, and carefully smoothed the wrinkles from her brow and her splendid broad-striped *moire antique* walking-dress—when she was surprised by a visit from her friend and pretty cousin, Sarah Henderson.

"Why, cousin Sarah!" exclaimed Jemima—she loved to call the fresh, handsome young girl her cousin; it sounded so youthful and affectionate!—"how delighted I am to see you! I was this minute coming round to get you to go with me for a walk in Chestnut street, and to tell me all the news. Well—

how did the grand dinner go off? I suppose aunt Henderson was very angry at my not being there—but then I had promised Mrs. Valentine, and I could not get away. How did it all go off?”

“Oh, such news, cousin Jemima! Mamma is in such a terrible way! She has been writing notes of apology all the morning, ever since breakfast—and she is so cross and snappish, that we had quite a regular tiff—for you know, my dear Jemima, that I am a young woman, now, and not to be snubbed like a baby—and so I came away to you, to tell you all about it.”

“Well, that was right, my dear—but what is it all about? What has happened?”

“Oh, you know that Mrs. Attarby? Well! there was such a nice company came to dinner—the largest party that ma ever received—and all dying with curiosity to see the great actress—when, just as they were going to sit down to dinner, a note was received from Mrs. Attarby”—

“Oh, ho!” interrupted Jemima, beginning already, in the anticipated discomfiture of her aunt, to forget her own mortifications; “so she didn’t come after all! How mortified aunt Henderson must have been!”

“Oh, yes—she came: but I’ll tell you all about it. In the first place came the note, saying that she could not be there for dinner, as she had just returned from the country; but that she would arrive in time for the reading. The dinner, notwithstanding that there was such a large party, was terribly stupid, and every

body kept looking at their watches, and waiting for the grand ceremonies to begin. At last, just at eight o'clock, when we had all taken our places in the drawing-room, and were waiting, exactly as we do at the philharmonic concert at the Chinese Museum, for the performances to begin, Mrs. Attarby arrived."

"Alone? How improper!"

"Oh, no—not alone; Mrs. Captain Wallingford came with her, and mamma hurried to meet them at the door, and led Mrs. Attarby to her seat, at the upper end of the room. But when she sat down, and every body stretched their necks to get a good look at her—I declare, Jemima, I can't finish! I am ashamed to tell you!"

"Nonsense, child! What was it? I'm on pins and needles!" exclaimed the impatient spinster.

"Well, cousin Jemima, you know, she had on a white satin dress, with a low body; and, oh, cousin! it was cut clear off the shoulders, and came down in the middle, as sure as I am alive, as low as *that!*" and the blushing maiden indicated, with the point of her glove, a spot on Miss Jemima's person, directly over the region where that juvenile lady was sometimes troubled with the dyspepsia.

"No! it isn't possible!—not as low as that!" exclaimed Miss Jenkins; "but then, of course, she wore a tucker?"

"Not a sign of one!—Not a stitch of any thing but her bare skin!" exclaimed Sarah, turning away her face, and blushing all colours, at the bare recollection.

“But what was the consequence?”

“Oh, dreadful! At first, the ladies stared, and then hid their faces behind their fans and handkerchiefs, but I saw some of them peeping out from under the corners, to get another look! Then they looked at one another; and then they all got up and went away, without saying a word to mamma, who sat down on a sofa, and cried for shame and spite. Then Mrs. Attarby and Mrs. Wallingford, who was dressed exactly like her friend, looked at each other, and laughed; and then they got up, and Mrs. Attarby stopped before mamma, and made a speech about purple tears and the downfall of houses; and then she and Mrs. Wallingford got into their carriage and drove away. I had hid myself behind the piano, and saw every thing.”

“Aunt Henderson must have been furious!”

“Oh, she was that! But now tell me all about the affair at Mrs. Valentine’s. Did the concert go off well? And poor Arthur—I mean, Mr. Wilmar—how did he play?—how did he look?”

“Oh, he played and looked in a way that wouldn’t have pleased *you*, very much, I suspect!” said Jemima, looking maliciously at her cousin, whose confusion betrayed the tender interest she felt in her young and handsome maestro. “He had eyes only for that Madame de Saintlieu—he is certainly in love with her—there’s no mistake about it!”

Sarah thought she would have fallen. But sup-

porting herself by the back of a chair, she said, in as calm a voice as she could,

"And she—I suppose she laughs at him for his pains. Why, she has got two children, hasn't she? She must be as old as you!"

"Oomph!—Well, cousin, *I* haven't got two children, have I? You needn't be cross at me, because I accidentally touched a tender spot. I did not know that you were in love with your music master!"

"I in love with Arthur—Wilmar!" exclaimed the little beauty, getting as red as one of the flounces of Miss Jemima's gala-dress; "what nonsense you do talk, cousin!"

"Oh, you needn't think I am so old as to be blind, cousin!" said Miss Jenkins, with a juvenile toss of the head. "I can see as far as most people."

"Now, don't be so provoking, cousin! I didn't mean any harm by what I said. Why, there is Mrs. Balderskin has had two children, and she isn't thirty, yet! I didn't mean any thing, cousin, upon my word I didn't! Now do be good, and don't tell mamma any of your absurd ideas about me and Mr. Wilmar. If you did, she would send him away directly,—and he's such an excellent teacher! Oh, he's taught me so many things that I never knew before!"

"I don't doubt it, you little pussy!" said Jemima, in a mollified voice, and patting Sarah's smooth face,—for she was not implacable, and really had a great affection for her cousin. "Well, well! you may trust me I won't betray you. But what is to be done about

Edward Ingraham? You know your mother has set her heart on that match for you."

"Oh!" said Sarah, with a pretty little pout; "Mr. Ingraham was very pressing, and mamma thought it would be an excellent match; but papa wouldn't hear of it. And for once he got the best of it, and mamma had to give up. To be sure, Mr. Ingraham is very rich, and very good looking—but he hasn't got such sweet eyes as Mr. Wilmar; and then you know Arthur's family is as good as our own—only they are poor. I thought it would be so noble, so romantic, you know, to enrich the struggling man of genius, with my love and my fortune—and I did love him, and I meant to tell him so—and run away with him—and then come back and throw ourselves on our knees, and ask papa's forgiveness and his blessing, you know! And now this ugly Madame de Saintlieu must come and take him away from me!" continued the girl, beginning to sob, and throwing herself into her cousin's arms.

"There, there, poor little thing! don't cry!" said Jemima, soothingly, and charmed with the idea of a runaway match and a romantic denœument. "It may not be so bad—I may be mistaken, probably they were only talking about music, after all. But I'll find out all about it for you, little puss! I'm not the woman to stand in the way of a true love match—my own heart is too susceptible to the tender passion!" she added, with a lugubrious sigh. "But have you never seen Mr. Ingraham since your father forbid that match?"

“Yes—I saw him once at Parkinson’s, with mamma. He looked as if he wanted to talk with me, but he was afraid of mamma—for papa had given it out that it was *she* who had opposed the match; and so he only bowed and smiled, and looked very hard at me, and went away.”

“Well, *come*, let us go and walk in Chestnut street; it will calm our agitated spirits,” said the sensitive Jemima. “I feel myself quite overcome by all these exciting emotions. We can stop at Parkinson’s, and take a glass of lemonade glacée: it will do us good.”

“Oh, I shall like that of all things!” exclaimed Sarah. “You know that mamma has forbidden me to go to Parkinson’s by myself: she says it isn’t proper. But then mamma is so absurd! Don’t all the young ladies go to Parkinson’s with their beaux, or by themselves? I’m sure there can be no harm in it. Mr. Parkinson is such a love of a little man! so polite and so attentive!”

“I’m sure *I* never saw any thing out of the way, there. It always seems to me as much like a first-day meeting of our people, as anything else—every thing is so grand and silent! I sometimes feel as if I wanted to make a speech, or do something to make a sensation!”

“Come, let us go! I must be home at two o’clock to take my music-lesson. Mr. Wilmar has not been for several days, now; he said he had to practise for that horrid Madame de Saintlieu’s *matinée*. I’m sure I am very glad it is over at last! I hope she won’t give any more!”

Our two young ladies now went out, and took their way to Chestnut street, which was already crowded with gaily dressed and smiling promenaders. The shops were all trimmed out in their brightest colours, and the pavement was thronged with omnibusses and carriages—while in front of the fashionable shops, long lines of the private equipages of our first families were drawn up at the curbstone, while their mistresses were engaged in the pleasing and mysterious rites of shopping, flirting with the smiling clerks, and talking over the scandal and gossip of the day—which the incidents of the previous day and evening, at the two “rival houses” of Henderson and Valentine, had made peculiarly racy and exciting. The clerks and salesmen at Levy’s were astonished at the sudden and increased demand for white satin, and the total cessation of the trade in tulle muslins; while Madame Basquine, the great fashionable dress-maker, declared that she didn’t know what the ladies’ fashions were coming to, and prophesied a speedy return to the classic simplicity of the days of Madame Tallien and the revolution of ’93.

As they passed Levy’s, Madame de Saintlieu and Mrs. Loftus were just coming out to get into their carriage. They stopped a moment to speak to Miss Jenkins, and Sarah was introduced to Madame de Saintlieu,—the French woman wondering and shrugging her shoulders, at this characteristic American party on the sidewalk. Sarah examined her rival with the keenest interest, and tried to persuade herself that

her own charms and dollars, (for young ladies soon find out the value of money in the matrimonial market,) would secure her ascendancy over the heart of Arthur Wilmar.

At this moment, a carriage drove briskly up to the sidewalk, and Mrs. Wallingford and Mrs. Attarby got out, and came up to the group. Sarah drew back, behind Miss Jenkins; but Mrs. Attarby took no notice of her; and going up to Madame de Saintlieu, was presented by Mrs. Wallingford.

“Oh, my dear Madame de Saintlieu!” exclaimed Mrs. Attarby; “you must not look so annoyed at holding an involuntary levée on the sidewalk—that is quite according to our democratic ideas in America. I used to be quite shocked at it; but I am now a furious republican, and find the sidewalk and the door-step just the thing for sociability, and a charming substitute for the dismal drawing-room! I have been dying to know you, and I really trust that you will come and see me—or allow me to come to see you—just as you choose to be American or European.”

“I shall be extremely happy, and I do not doubt Mrs. Loftus, who is at present my hostess, will let me take a liberty with her kind hospitality, and invite you to her house.”

“I shall be too much honoured, my dear Madame; you know my house is your own,” replied Mrs. Loftus, slightly bowing to Mrs. Attarby, and speaking in a constrained though kindly voice, to Madame de Saintlieu.

"I thank you sincerely, my dear Mrs. Loftus," said Mrs. Attarby, with one of her irresistible smiles: "and if you will only permit me, I do not despair of even making you like me a little better than I know you do at present."

"Madam, I ——"

"Oh, no offence, my dear Mrs. Loftus! I have got beyond all the *convenables*, and mean to find out and love all the good people—and I know you are one of them—and what is more, I mean to make them all love me in return! So, I give you fair warning!—Beware!"

Then, with a dashing bow, and a gay laugh, she made a friendly gesture to Madame de Saintlieu, and with her friend Mrs. Wallingford, went into the shop—while Jemima and Sarah continued their walk, and Mrs. Loftus and the astonished Madame de Saintlieu entered their carriage and drove homeward.

"I do not wonder at your surprise," said Mrs. Loftus, with her kind smile; "but you have many things yet to learn, in our democratic country. Above all things let me repeat her own warning, addressed to me by Mrs. Attarby—beware of her! You know I never indulge in gossip or scandal. But I feel for you the interest and affection of a mother; and I know how easy it would be for you, with your unsuspecting nature, inexperienced in the littleness, the jealousy, the cowardice, of American 'exclusive' society, to utterly destroy your position and prospects, without an act or thought of wrong. Mrs. Attarby is wealthy,

and is the wife of a man whose position cannot be questioned—and she is tolerated by a society that hates and fears her. But let her be deprived of her wealth and nominal position, as the wife of Granger Attarby, and they would trample her in the dust, without pity or remorse. I know them, my child—and you must learn to know them too.”

“My dear friend, I will be guided by you in all things; I will not see Mrs. Attarby—I will not be at home when she calls.”

“Oh, no—not that—it is unnecessary to make an open enemy of her or her friend Mrs. Wallingford. See her, and act as your own good sense, now that I have told you her real standing, shall dictate.”

“But what has she done?”

“Nothing, that I know of, except committed some eccentric violations of the forms and conventionalities of etiquette, habits and costume. But it is not for those that she is hated and condemned.”

“Do they bring any charges against her character?”

“No, none that I ever heard of; and they certainly would have done so if they could.”

“For what, then is she condemned?”

“For the crime which women in society never forgive in their own sex—for being their superior,” said Mrs. Loftus, with a disdainful smile; “be careful, my dear friend, that you do not incur their hatred and persecution for the same offence!”

“It is for my darlings!” murmured the wondering Felice, sinking back on her seat, dismayed at all she heard; “all for them! God, give me strength!”

CHAPTER XXIII.

RESTITUTION.

IRA HENDERSON paced up and down his cell, fierce and silent as those wild beasts who go to and fro in their iron cages, shaking the bars with their paws, and glaring at the spectators with eyes of fire. We have said he was no coward; and what he now felt was a hatred of mankind, and of a world he so long had juggled and deceived, but which now threatened to avenge itself upon him, for not only his own crimes, but those of others. But he had no *fear*. He did not quail, he did not lament, he did not curse. What he had now to do, was to reflect, to resolve, and to act. He knew he was not guilty of the crime for which he had been arrested—but appearances and circumstances were all against him—and he had laughed to scorn the idea of an over-ruling Providence, who would protect the innocent. Had not his whole life been an outrage upon his pious profession of that belief? Besides, even if there were some mysterious power, who distributed inexorable and infinite justice, what had he to expect from its exercise? True, he had not committed murder; but he had crowned a life

of fraud and perfidy, by reducing to beggary the family of the friend who had trusted him on his death-bed, with their happiness, and by a deliberate attempt to dishonour his daughter. One by one, in ghastly procession, all his past deeds arose before him, and compelled him to sit in judgment upon himself; and the verdict of his own soul condemned him to destruction.

But, to add to these crushing retrospections, came the terrible weight of his present actual position.— Could he clear himself of this murder? Even could Helen Wilmar be induced to testify to the truth of all she knew, she might, indeed, disclose the infamous purpose for which he was at the house of Mrs. Anthony; but she could not possibly declare that he did not commit the murder. He had left her at a little after midnight; and at three o'clock, as he was preparing to return to her chamber, a scream was heard, which startled him, and aroused Mrs. Anthony, both of whom had hastened up stairs. Going to Helen's chamber, he found it empty; and in returning to the stairs, he had encountered the blood, and met Mrs. Anthony, and both had then entered the other chamber, and found the corpse of the murdered girl. Where was Helen all this time? how had she escaped from her chamber? and how long had she been gone? These questions remained unanswered.

There were, evidently, but two ways by which he could be relieved of this charge: one, was the testimony of Mrs. Anthony, and the other, was the disco-

very of the real murderer. But was there any hope that the woman, his creature, would endanger her own safety,—encounter the absolute certainty of a heavy penalty for keeping a disorderly house, and the risk of a prosecution as an accessory to the murder, by coming forward and putting herself into the hands of the law? He, of course, knew nothing of Ingraham's arrest, and supposed that he alone was suspected of the crime.

Then, would Helen come forward and testify in his behalf! What right, what reason, had he to hope that she would voluntarily subject herself to a public acknowledgment of the outrage and insult she had suffered, to save the life of the author and perpetrator? Would not her indignation rather suffer him to be punished for the crime of which he was not guilty, in expiation of the wrongs to her, which he had committed? He questioned his own heart.—Would he not so act? yes—yes—a thousand times, yes!

Still, this did not quite convince him that he had nothing to hope from Helen. He knew that the tender heart and the upright conscience of a young girl, were actual existences—for she herself had convinced him of it, in disdaining his temptations, and spurning his brilliant offers. But now, if by merely testifying to the truth, and thus saving the life of a human being—even if that being were her enemy—she could regain the fortune of herself, her brother and sisters, and see them all restored to their former position—he

thought she would not hesitate. But how to approach her?—how to communicate with her? Whom could he intrust with so delicate, so difficult, so momentous a negotiation? Mr. Spearbill? No.—He already knew of the fraud by which the fortune of the Wilmars had been alienated. He had shared liberally in the spoils, and was not the man to refund a dollar. Besides, he had the power in his hands, and would inevitably divert the whole of the fortune to his own use, if the subject were once agitated. Dr. Felton,—yes! He was the man! The thought was a gleam of light. The doctor had remained the firm friend of the family, under all their sufferings and afflictions. He sympathized deeply with the loss of their fortune, and would rejoice in its restoration.

And this fortune, after all, what was it? In the mighty financial schemes, of which he was the invisible head and mover—schemes which embraced the whole Union, from New York to California, in a wide circle of financial fraud, and even mingled their influences in the monetary and political movements of Europe—a system which he had himself conceived, and which the fortune of Wilmar had at length enabled him to set in operation—in this gigantic scheme, whose vast resources might mark the hours of the day with its millions—what was now the insignificant sum of which he had robbed them? Nothing—a trifle!—Let it go! Let him but be once free of this accusation and this hateful cell, and a single month would replenish his treasury for this loss. Yes—Dr. Felton

was the man—he felt quite sure of it, and quite confident of success.

But he must wait till morning. Morning!—When would it be morning? He had already paced up and down the cell, as it would seem, at least a year—and yet he had seen no light, since the last rays of sunset had left the narrow window of the cell, crept over the brown court-yard, climbed the dull gray wall, and lost themselves in the darkness. He must still walk up and down, and wait.

He had not tasted food for many hours. Until now, he had not thought of that; but now, that he seemed to have discovered a clue that would lead him out of this dark labyrinth, the mind grew calm, and the body asserted its wants. He had noticed nothing that had transpired since he was put into the cell, and knew not whether they had left him any food, or how he was to ask for it; and yet, he now began to feel faint with hunger. Going to the iron door of his cell, with the intention of calling some one, he found, on the little shelf made by the fall of the wicket in the inner door, a basin of some liquid substance, which he supposed was soup. He drank it down voraciously—not stopping to inquire too curiously into its flavour—and then resumed his monotonous walk.

By-and-by, he felt so much relieved and encouraged, by the plan of action he had marked out, that he rolled himself in some blankets he found in one corner of the cell, and lay down, without a pillow

or mattress, on the floor, to spend the remainder of his first night in prison.

In the morning,—having ascertained from the keeper who gave him his bread and coffee, through the little wicket in the iron door, that he was permitted the use of pen and paper,—he wrote an open note to Dr. Felton, urging him to come immediately to see him, as he had a confidential communication to make, of the utmost moment to those in whom the doctor took a deep interest.

The afternoon brought the worthy doctor to the prison; and after a long interview with the prisoner, he was observed to go away, with a well pleased expression on his benevolent countenance.

Getting into an antiquated chaise, which for so many years had borne him about the city, in his errands of mercy to the suffering and the afflicted, he drove to the office of Mr. Spearbill, the great lawyer, in a little street, near the State House.

He found the great lawyer, having got through with his morning engagements in the courts, dozing in a huge leathern arm chair, beside a large table covered with black cloth, and heaped with papers,—across which, by way of paper weights, (a purely American invention,) lay a pair of not over-clean boots, with the soles presented, like the muzzles of a brace of twenty-four pounders, towards the door.

“Good evening, Mr. Spearbill,” said the doctor, “I am sorry to disturb your meditations; but I have a little business which will admit of no delay.”

"Bless my soul!" said the great lawyer, taking down his legs, and rubbing his eyes with his pocket handkerchief, which he hastily withdrew from his bald head, where he had disposed it, as ladies do theirs in a sudden rain, to protect it from the flies, or a draft of air from the window behind his chair. "Why, I believe—nay, I think we may say with certainty—that it is our old friend Dr. Felton! Delighted to see you, doctor! Pray be seated! You have of course heard the news, doctor, of our friend, Mr. Henderson? A terrible blow, doctor—quite a terrible blow, in—deed! Ah, we don't know whom to trust in this wicked world, doctor! Terrible blow!—a terrible blow,—in—deed!"

"Yes, it is, as you say, a terrible blow," replied the doctor, sitting down and drawing a paper from his pocket. "I have just been to pay a visit to Mr. Henderson, where I waited upon him at his urgent request. He has thought proper to confide the consummation of certain measures, to me, in relation to the property of the late Mr. Wilmar, our mutual and much esteemed friend. Here is Mr. Henderson's authority, which he has just given me, for receiving certain papers relating to the affair, now in your hands."

Mr. SpeARBILL took the paper, and read it very carefully, several times. Then, holding it in his hand, and looking inquiringly at his boots, as if interrogating them as to how they had got down from the

table, where he recollected to have placed them but a short time before, he muttered,

“Yes, our mutual and much-loved friend!—very mutual indeed—very much loved—very! You are quite right, doctor—quite right, in-deed!”

“But the papers, Mr. Spearbill! I am in a great hurry, as I have already neglected several patients, who will be expecting me, and must hasten on upon my rounds.”

“Yes, certainly—much loved friend—very much loved friend, in-deed! Excellent man, doctor—an excellent man! I had supposed, from your intimacy with the family, that you were to have been one of the original administrators.”

“Oh!” replied the Doctor, laughing; “my ministrations are all for the living—I can do nothing for the dead. When they come to that stage of the proceedings, as you would say, I turn them over to the sextons—or the lawyers.”

“Ha! very good! Upon my soul, very good, doctor—ve-ry! Read Molière, I see, But then you know, he was down upon the doctors, too, a little—yes, a little—down upon the—doc-tors! Ah ha! Very good—ve-ry!”

“Well, Mr. Spearbill,” said the doctor, growing impatient; “I’ll trouble you for those papers directly, if you please—I really must go.”

“Why, you see, papers, my dear doctor, are—are, in fact, papers! I must take a little time to make up an opinion on this matter—an opinion—yes. Call

in a day or two, and we will see what had better be done."

"Sir!" said Dr. Felton, rising, and colouring with something like anger; "I beg you to review that speech, and reconsider your determination. I did not come here, either expecting or being willing to be trifled with. It is a very simple case, I believe: you have some papers in your possession, belonging absolutely to Mr. Henderson, who entrusted them to you. He now wishes them transferred to me—~~th~~ ~~re~~ is his authority in full for your doing so. There is here neither necessity nor room for an opinion."

"Yes, my dear doctor; but you see"——

"I see, sir," said the doctor, interrupting him with animation; "that I have been mistaken in my estimate of a character which I thought I understood. I have no time to waste words. If you will give me the papers I have shown you the authority for delivering up, very well. If not, I shall immediately follow the directions laid down in this other paper, also drawn up by Mr. Henderson with his own hand, for my guidance under the emergency in which I now find myself.—This is, to commence a prosecution immediately, in the name of Arthur Wilmar and his mother and sisters, for the recovery of the documents pertaining to the administration of Mr. Wilmar's estate, which are withheld by you. I have heard a list of the witnesses who will be summoned to appear in this case—among whom is the cashier of the —— Bank, which has several checks drawn by Mr. Hen-

derson to your order, and endorsed by you—especially one for a thousand dollars, dated on the very day in which you received these papers. I have, also, here the deposition of Mr. Henderson himself, duly certified by a magistrate sent for from the prison for that purpose during my interview, containing a full account of the transactions which led to the loss of their property by the Wilmars—with the names of *all* the parties concerned in it. I am no lawyer, Mr. Spearbill, but I am a man of common sense: and I *know* that, upon this affidavit, and my own, a criminal magistrate will instantly grant a warrant against the parties in it, who are still at large, for a conspiracy to defraud the Wilmars out of their estate.”

“Doctor Felton!” exclaimed Mr. Spearbill, starting up, his face livid with indignation—or fear—“do you know that you are making libellous insinuations—that your words are actionable?”

“Well, sir—if they are, I am willing to stand to them; and, as I see you have no witnesses here, I shall proceed to the mayor’s office, and utter them in public—and swear to them, too! Good day, sir!”

“Stop, stop, doctor! Don’t be so hot! Why, you quite astonish me! Let me see; *I* don’t want the papers—they are of no interest to me, except that they were confided to my charge in a professional way, by a client,—and we lawyers, you know my dear doctor, have to be very particular about such things!”

“Yes—I know they were given to you, and that,

after a *careful* and *deliberate* examination, you gave your professional opinion that they were all right, and that the Wilmars were regularly ruined, according to law. But there are now reasons for believing that even your legal acumen was, for once, mistaken—Jove sometimes nods, you know! The question now is, am I to have the papers? Yes, or no?”

Mr. Spearbill hesitated—he was at his wit's end: he had suddenly and unexpectedly found himself over-matched, and by an adversary who did not seem disposed to forego any advantage.

“Doctor Felton,” said he, at last; “let us understand one another. I do not pretend to say that the Wilmars have not suffered some wrong; and I will say, farther, that no one can so quickly and thoroughly right them, as myself. On the other hand, if you drive me to my defences, I can at least, greatly retard and embarrass, if not defeat, you. If you will show me the deposition of Mr. Henderson, of which you have spoken, and give me your word of honour that the matter shall be pushed no farther than the restoration to the Wilmars of their father's fortune, I will serve both you and them. I have no possible pecuniary interest in withholding it from them. Whatever I may have received from Mr. Henderson, in the shape of fees in this affair, was from his own funds, and not from the property of the Wilmars.”

“I agree, on one condition—that you give me the immediate custody of the papers,—and that you also

tell me how soon the transfer to the Wilmars, of their rightful property, can be effected."

"There are the papers, doctor;" said the lawyer, taking a package of documents, labelled "Estate of Wilmar," from the desk, and handing them across the table.

"And when can the final arrangements be made?"

"To-morrow. It only requires Mr. Henderson's signature to certain drafts and certificates of transfer."

"And what is the amount of the fortune?"

"Something over three quarters of a million, with the interest added," said Spearbill, with a shrug. "A nice sum, Doctor Felton," he continued, relapsing into his deliberative tone and manner—"a nice sum—ve-ry!"

"Good day, sir! I shall be with you early to-morrow. Have the kindness to make every thing ready, so that we may despatch the business at once. Good day!" and the worthy doctor, flushed with the unusual excitement into which he had been drawn, in defence of his friends' rights, got into his chaise, and trotted off, to pay a visit to his patient, Helen, who was still confined to her room.

The next day, the business was transacted exactly as had been agreed upon. Doctor Felton and Mr. Spearbill visited Mr. Henderson in prison, who signed the necessary papers with alacrity.

The affair was a very simple one. The funds of Wilmar had been deposited in bank by the executor, in his own name—an exact account having been kept

of them, in the papers which were at first given to Spearbill, and which we have just seen pass into the hands of the doctor. Henderson had drawn out every dollar of the money, before the bank failed, as he knew its position better than did the officers themselves. The great reputation and high standing of Spearbill, had made his declaration, as the trusted attorney of Mr. Wilmar during his life, a final settlement of the question, in the eyes of Dr. Felton and the Wilmars; and no farther means were resorted to, to test the accuracy of Henderson's report, and the reality of their loss. It was now only necessary for Henderson to make over, from his own funds, the proper amount of the Wilmars' fortune. This was now accomplished, and the doctor assuring Henderson that every thing in respect to his case remained exactly as he had related it to him yesterday, and that he need give himself no uneasiness, took his departure—leaving Spearbill, at Henderson's request, to discuss and arrange for the approaching trial—*habeas corpus* having been refused, and an arraignment and trial of both Henderson and Ingraham on the same indictment having been determined on.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TRIAL.

WE shall not attempt to paint the grief of Madame de Saintlieu, at the discovery—alas, too late!—that the poor Rosalie, who had found her death in a house of infamy, in an obscure alley, was the last of her own blood—the daughter of her sister, whose fate had brought her mother to the grave, and whose image, as she recalled it from the dim but imperishable memories of childhood, had seemed to her that of some angel, who had watched over her in infancy, and whom she was to meet with her mother in heaven. Such griefs, in which a powerful and noble nature is called upon to struggle, singly and alone, over the errors, the misfortunes, and the calamities, of a whole race, of which it knows itself the last representative, are too sacred, too awful, to be unveiled.—They go deep below the common level of human suffering—like those vast waves of the Pacific, with which the ocean sobs, after some world-wandering hurricane that sweeps across her bosom, and seem, as they rise and fall, to take on the eternal undulations of the mountains and valleys that

lie unfathomable depths below, upheaved and rent asunder by earth's central fires.

In this season of overwhelming wo, when life and all its hopes seemed but a mockery, only tempting the soul to escape to some existence that must be less terrible than this, and which paralyzed every spring and energy of her strong and courageous nature; Felice had but one ray of comfort—the deep and earnest sympathy of her new friend, the young artist, Arthur Wilmar. Even her children had become objects that only recalled or increased her sorrow. She looked at them with a shudder, as she thought of the fate of her sister's child, and remembered that, but for her, they too were as lonely and as helpless, in a strange un pitying world, as the poor dead Rosalie. But for her! And what was her strength, to protect and watch over, and guard them from evil? She knew how trivial, how false, how hollow, were the smiles, and how brief and fruitless might be the popularity of the present moment. A freak, a caprice, a forgetfulness, of the capricious and forgetful world, might suddenly deprive her of strength, and leave them all to want and beggary. For a time, the agony of the fearful mother overcame even her affection. She almost deemed the fate of Rosalie a happy and an enviable one, to the innocent, the tender, and the unprotected; and she formed wild and terrible resolutions—that, if it should ever be thus with them—if the new hopes that had smiled upon her should fade, and the black storm of want and despair should close around them—she would

herself shed their innocent blood, ere the pure hearts that fountained it, had become fouled and poisonous—and so follow them to heaven!

In these dark days, following more dismal nights, Arthur became a daily and constant blessing. He came every morning, at a certain hour, for whose return her heart had learned to wait with an uncontrollable impatience, as an infant in the wierd twilight of its chamber waits for the light that is to come and drive away the shadowy phantoms that oppress it. Sometimes he would sit for hours, holding her hand in his, and gazing at her in silence—until the electric quality of his loving and tender sympathy had stolen into her soul, and restored some portion of its broken calm. Nothing he thought of himself, in all this—only of her. And yet, in this terrible season, while the thought of his own love was buried far beyond his own consciousness, and he only lived to sooth and calm *her* sufferings, her heart gradually rose to meet him, and began to transmute the convulsive beatings of an unutterable sorrow into the trembling palpitations of a new-born love. Yes—that was the period of his most successful wooing. The gratitude, the affection, inspired by so much self-denying devotion, such earnest sympathy, softly changed to love. And when at last the cloud fell from her spirit, and left the memory of her sister, and her sister's child, smiling like stars in the serene sky, the symbols of both memory and hope—she looked within her own bosom, and saw that she had no

longer the power to choose between friendship and love.

Still no word had passed between them of love—nor did either feel the strength or courage to renew the discussion of their sweet heart's secret. Their old occupations and intercourse were gradually resumed, as if all had been a dream—only, there was a tender light in the glance of Felice, as she watched her boy artist giving way to the inspirations that rose from his teeming brain, and seeking through the infinite world of the ideal, for the type of that supreme excellence, whose living embodiment he felt was standing, warm and palpitating, beside him. Oh, the exquisite delights of this voluptuous Platonism—this dallying of the soul with the anticipations of those brief sensations with which passion triumphs even in the moment of its death over the serene immortality of its rival! Who, that has felt them, would exchange them, without a shudder of terror at what might come, even for love itself!

Nor shall we pursue the contemplation of the antithesis of this picture—the vulgar, dissolute, heartless seducer, who writhes and howls in impotent fury in his cell, or cowers during the long night, under his miserable blanket, striving to hide his head from the goblin shadows that haunt and pursue him. A coward through all his nature, there still had beat one ennobling pulse in his depraved and corrupted heart—that was love for Rosalie. Yes, as far as he was capable of loving any but himself, he had sincerely loved her. That

chaste yet voluptuous beauty, which had so enthralled his senses—that angelic trust, which beheld in him, her adored one, all that was noble and heroic, all that he knew he so hopelessly lacked—had twined their green bonds closely about his heart. Under other circumstances, this love perhaps might have purified and saved him. But he had trampled on it—the sacred light that alone guarded that demon-haunted nature, had been stricken to the ground by his own hand, and had set to him forever, in blood and death.

Slowly the paroxysms of his fury, his terror, his remorse, subsided into a sullen insensibility. If he had thought at all upon the particulars of his present position, he had failed to arrive at any conclusion, or to adopt any course of action. Arrested in the midst of one of his habitual night debauches, into which, to drown his fearful recollections, he had plunged with unwonted recklessness and depth, he was taken to prison in a state of permanent intoxication—a chronic drunkenness, whose consequences, when suddenly checked, are so frightful to the physical and moral nature, that none but physicians, or the keepers of prisons or hospitals, can form any idea of them. *Mania à potu* has been often described; but never has there been, and never can there be, any adequate picture of its horrors, drawn by pen or pencil.

For several days after his imprisonment, Ingraham was a victim to this distemper, which raged with unwonted violence. The grotesque visions and phantoms which, in this disease, the outraged stomach and nerves

send to the brain, in all the vivid distinctness of reality, all assumed to him, some monstrous modification of the form and aspect of the dead and bleeding Rosalie. Sometimes she was a dragon, with burning wings and fiery breath, that exhaled an atmosphere of blood, who rushed furiously towards him, to clasp him in her bat-like arms—but always the pale dead face looked at him with its stony eyes, as it had done, on that night, in the fatal chamber. At other times, she would steal upon him in the form of a huge serpent, twining and coiling tightly about him, while the dead pale face would try, in horrid playfulness, to kiss him.

When all this passed away, Edward Ingraham was a wreck. His face was ghastly—his clothes were unchanged, his beard unshaven—and as he cowered in his cell, glaring out with his wild and terror-brightened eyes, he looked like his own evil genius, who had destroyed its charge, and taken his place on earth.

Finally, a day or two before the trial, he recovered his senses sufficiently to recollect something of the past, with distinctness, and to realize his own position. He was not at all aware of the arrest of Henderson; but he knew, from the disclosures made to him by the policeman Wilkins, during their black mail negotiations, that he had been traced from the house, and that the letter and picture, although not perhaps conclusive, were still strong evidence against him. Mrs. Anthony, too, (he did not know that she had escaped,) would testify that he was an habitual visiter at the house—that none ever saw Rosalie but himself—and

that at the very time of the catastrophe, he must have been in her room. No mortal, as he believed, could know that he did *not* strike the blow, save her whom it had slain. It appeared to him, therefore, that his fate was inevitable. His career was over—he had but a few days more on earth. What a reflection, for a criminal and a coward!

The days hurried on, and at length, the hour of the trial approached. Since sunrise, the street in front of the State House had been densely thronged with the population; as if the venerable pile, which has thundered forth the startling intelligence of so many conflagrations, were itself in flames. Nothing had ever occurred, which had so deeply agitated the community, as this double arrest for the murder of a young and lovely girl, of two men unquestionably belonging to the “first families.” Wonder, gossip, curiosity, scandal, surmise, even indignation, exhausted themselves in discussing, inquiring, and reading the newspapers. Business was almost suspended in its ordinary channels; and the whole body politic seemed to hang with suspended breaths upon the issue of this astounding event.

Of course, in the fashionable world, the sensation had been central and convulsive. Society, like a planet arrested in its orbit, stood still, faltered, and fell to pieces—the scattered fragments flying from each other, as if in dismay. Invitations already given, were revoked; entertainments decided upon, were indefinitely postponed; marriages were broken off; whole blocks of

houses were shut up. The fashionable world had become, as it were, extinguished! Its carriages no more rattled along Chestnut street—its lady patronesses no longer lounged at Levy's, or dined at Parkinson's.—All was over—all was naught.

When Arthur Wilmar had first learned the relationship of Rosalie de Morny, to his friend Madame de Saintlieu, he had formed a determination to take her to Helen, that she might talk with one who had seen the poor girl, in the last moment of her existence.—The family of the Wilmars had now all been made acquainted with the real history of Helen's adventures, on that terrible night—though Dr. Felton had strictly charged them not to disclose any of the circumstances, until the trial. But Arthur was not afraid to entrust the secret to Felice—she was to him more than himself.

Wilmar had rightly divined. When he related the whole story to Madame de Saintlieu, she expressed the liveliest desire to see and converse with Helen; and learning that his sister was not yet permitted to leave her room, she begged that Arthur would take her home with him at once. After that, she went often to Helen, and nursed and tended her so affectionately, that Kate and Emma, who had already learned to love her, used often to leave them for hours alone together. Felice's sympathies were powerfully diverted from herself to Helen; and while watching by the bedside of the heart-broken and fading girl, she felt her own strength and self-possession return. She

had obtained her sister's picture, promising to restore it, if needed, on the trial; and in gazing upon it, and in her long interviews with Helen—and, more than all, from the silent influence of Arthur's unfaltering devotion—her mind and heart now rapidly regained their calm and healthful tone, and she began to resume her wonted and beautiful influence upon the lives of those who surrounded her.

On the day of the trial, the moment the doors were opened, the court-room was instantly filled to suffocation, by a crowd, the foremost of whom had been obstinately besieging the doors and embracing the walls, ever since daylight. If the critics will attend the almost always crowded court-rooms, and note the eager and absorbing interest with which the audience watch the proceedings of every cause, from the most trivial to the most important, from broad farce, to the grand tragedies of real life and death, they will discover the real solution of the much mooted question of the decay of the drama. Our fierce democracy must have the *real* drama—it has, as yet, no hunger for the higher realities of art.

The judges took their seats, and the prisoners—who now met for the first time since their arrest—were arraigned. A jury was empanelled without difficulty—for, so innumerable and contradictory had been the reports of the newspapers, that few had been able to form any definite opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the prisoners. The indictment was read amidst the profoundest silence—their separate pleas of not

guilty were duly recorded—and then the attorney for the commonwealth rose, and in a few lucid, calm and perspicuous sentences, explained to the jury the nature of the charge, the evidence he expected to produce, and the considerations that must govern them as to the guilt or innocence, or the degree of guilt, of the prisoners, either or both of them. With good taste, he entirely abstained from any declamation, calculated to distort or divert the minds of the jury from the earnest consideration of the bare facts in the case.

A brief pause now ensued; and the audience occupied themselves, while the preparations for commencing the examination of witnesses were going on, in an eager scrutiny of the prisoners.

Mr. Henderson appeared pale and stern, but confident and resolved. There was even an expression of triumph and defiance in his eyes, which were fixed steadily upon the court, watching the proceedings. He was alone; for in good society it is not in good taste for the wife or family of a man accused of crime, to manifest any interest in his fate. The extent of their demonstrations of affection are, to remain at home, and receive the condolences of friends upon *their* “unfortunate position.” Besides, no such degree of affection or regard existed between Mr. Henderson and his family, as would have rendered their presence a support or consolation to either. They had heretofore lived together in a strict observance of the proprieties—nothing more: and as the present

occasion, those proprieties were duly maintained. What more would you have?

As for Ingraham, although he was now silent and passive, his haggard face and glaring eyes showed the intensity of his sufferings and his apprehensions. Dr. Felton had made it an imperative condition with Mr. Spearbill, who appeared as the counsel for the defence, in both cases, that Ingraham should not be informed of Helen having been a witness of his final interview with Rosalie; and the poor young man had been left in all the terrors of apprehension.—He, too, was alone; for it could by no means be supposed that the gay and fashionable Mrs. Valentine would allow herself to be seen in so vulgar a place as a court-room;—and as to her husband, Edward's uncle, we have already said that he was an invalid, who seldom or never left his own room, save now and then, on extraordinary fine days, when he would take a ride of a mile or two, into the country, attended by a faithful servant, the only creature in the household who seemed to be aware that he still existed.

The first witness called was Captain Butler, who related his suspicions, previously entertained, of the character of the house inhabited by Mrs. Anthony, and his having seen one of the prisoners, Mr. Henderson, on the night of the murder, leave that house, apparently in haste and confusion, and steal stealthily and quickly away. He then gave an account of having met policeman Wilkins, of entering the house, finding the dead body of Rosalie de Mornay, and the

pool of blood, and the footsteps in the hall. The dimensions of these footsteps he had accurately measured, and from comparison with the feet of the prisoner, Henderson, the measurements had corresponded exactly.

It was then proved, by the head clerk and cashier of Mr. Henderson, that his employer, on the afternoon preceding the murder, had received a telegraphic despatch, from a correspondent of the house in Trenton, stating that Mr. Henderson's presence there was necessary, to close an important and long-pending affair, and that he had announced to the witness that he should proceed to Trenton by the five o'clock train, and probably return the next day. The witness, in carrying on the correspondence of the house, since Mr. Henderson's arrest, had discovered that no such despatch had been sent by their Trenton correspondent, and that Mr. Henderson had not been there.

The next witness was a night ferryman on the Walnut street ferry-boat, who swore distinctly that Mr. Henderson had crossed over from Philadelphia to Camden, in the first boat, at about daylight, on the night in question.

The prosecution now called to the stand the policeman Wilkins. As he mounted into the little box appropriated to the witnesses, he cast an indescribable glance at Ingraham, half disappointment, half triumph, of which, however, the prisoner did not seem to take any notice. He testified to having seen the accused, Ingraham, coming from the house of Mrs.

Anthony, on the morning of the murder, a little before four o'clock, and then run swiftly up the street, frequently looking behind him. The witness then related that, upon meeting his superior, Captain Butler, he had communicated his suspicions, and that both then proceeded to the house, and discovered the body of Rosalie; and that, lying on the table near where the body was discovered, he had found a miniature and an open letter, both of which were shown him and identified. He also stated that he had subsequently encountered Ingraham in an oyster-cellar, and upon alluding to the murder, the prisoner had at first asked him what he meant. But that, upon mentioning the picture and the letter he had found, the prisoner, in great agitation, exclaimed, "Is it possible! I forgot that I left the letter!"—that he had then proposed to buy the pictures and the letter, for which he offered to pay five thousand dollars; but that the witness had refused, and had delivered them into the hands of the mayor, who had the charge of collecting the evidence in the case.

This completed the evidence for the prosecution, and the attorney for the state gave way to his learned brother, Mr. Spearbill, who rose to open for the defence.

Mr. Spearbill rose with even more than his usual importance. He had, he said, as in duty bound, listened in respectful patience to his learned and honourable brother, who had been called to the painful task—very painful task, under all circumstances, but

peculiarly so, when an advocate for the people feels himself called upon to strike down the highest and most worthy ornaments of the people. But he had, notwithstanding, listened with no small degree of impatience—knowing, as he did know, that he had it in his power, from the first moment of the arraignment of the prisoners, to put an instant and summary stop to the proceedings. But such was far from his intention. Both in the interests of his clients, and in the interests of justice, he had determined to let the trial take its full course; and the jury could not have failed observe, that he had not even cross-examined the witnesses produced by his learned and eloquent friend on behalf of the prosecution. But now, that his learned friend had concluded his case, he must proceed to perform the grateful and welcome duty of establishing, by the most unimpeachable testimony of an eye witness to the death of the unfortunate young girl, Rosalie de Morny, the entire and absolute innocence of both the prisoners at the bar, of any part or lot in the matter.

At this address, the audience opened their eyes and ears, with renewed attention, and a murmur of astonishment ran through the assemblage—while Edward Ingraham, who had remained during the progress of the trial, in an attitude of sullen and desperate resolution, suddenly rose erect from his stooping posture, and looked inquiringly at his defender, while a flush of hope glowed in his face and gleamed in his eyes. Could it be possible that the advocate's wards meant

anything but the usual flourish with which the defence of a hopeless cause is commenced?

Yes—here is Helen Wilmar, pale and feeble, supported by her brother on one side, and Dr. Felton on the other, advancing from the witness benches, and making her way slowly and painfully to the stand.—A thrill of sympathy went through the crowd, as they beheld the young and feeble girl, whose wasted cheek and tottering step told too plainly that she was fitter for the sick room than for the rude and crowded court. Who was she?—and what could she know of the murder of the young French girl in Cherry street? Perhaps she was the girl's companion—and yet, she did not look at all like “one of that sort” to which the charitable public had unhesitatingly assigned the murdered.

Helen, after leaning a moment on her brother, stepped into the witness stand and sat down—the court having considerably ordered an attendant to place a chair for her.—She seemed to gain a momentary strength, even from the strangeness of her position; and looking for an instant at Ingraham, she commenced her narration. Clearly, and without faltering or hesitation, she related the entire history of her adventures on the day and night of the murder. So distinct and lucid were her statements, that not a doubt of their entire truth rested on the minds of court or jury, or of any person in the crowded auditory. When she had concluded, the prosecuting attorney, declining to cross-examine the witness, rose, and stating to the

court that the testimony they had just heard—coming from so respectable and entirely unimpeachable a source—had completely satisfied him of the innocence of the prisoners, of the charge upon which they were arraigned—however guilty might have been their conduct in other respects—and he would therefore ask the jury to return a verdict of acquittal, without going farther into the case, as the shortest way of disposing of the whole matter.

To this, the court could see no objection: the jury were so instructed—and the prisoners were consequently discharged—apparently much to the discontent of the enlightened and appreciative audience, who went away grumbling, much in the same humour as if they had been to a cock-pit where the fight had not come off. In a few minutes the court-room was deserted—and in less than half an hour, a procession of ragged newsboys were met, on the run up Chestnut street, crying in every possible pitch of juvenile squeak,

“Ere’s the extry *Legge*—got the horrible murder—verdict of the jury—only one cent!”

CHAPTER XXV.

RICHES AND DEATH.

THE excitement of the scenes and emotions through which she had lately passed, and the exhaustion of her effort to appear at the trial, left Helen in a state of utter prostration. From the court-room she had been assisted to a carriage, and taken home, where she was received by her sisters with the tenderest care; while Dr. Felton, who accompanied her, with Arthur, seeing how weak and broken-down she appeared, became at length really alarmed, and determined not to leave the house, lest some sudden attack should occur, at which his presence might be necessary. However, after she had been got to bed, she lay for some time in a kind of stupor, from which she awoke, feeling better and more comfortable. She thanked the doctor for his kindness; and saying that she thought a good sleep would be the best restorative of her strength and spirits, she begged the doctor not to longer neglect his other patients, and to leave her—promising that she would be quite well in the morning. Arthur had already gone out, to give some lessons, which he had

neglected—feeling that he had no right to give up his occupations, upon which they all depended, and foreseeing that the serious illness of Helen might impose additional burdens upon his slender earnings. Dr. Felton, therefore, after giving some directions to Emma and Kate, took his leave, promising to call in the morning to see after the state of his patient.

The next day, just as their melancholy breakfast was over, and Arthur was preparing to go out, a letter came for Helen. She had passed a quiet night, and said that she felt much better—though the increasing pallor of her cheeks, and a convulsive hectic cough, which had clung to her for several weeks, and now seemed more severe than ever, filled her brother and sisters with fearful apprehensions. They all, however, concluded to proceed to her chamber, and see whether the letter was of importance—wondering from whom it had come.

Helen blushed and trembled violently as she took the letter, and saw the superscription. She called Arthur, and holding it out to him, with the seal yet unbroken, said,

“Oh, dear brother, it is from Edward! Read it, and make what answer to it may be necessary. If it contains any thing to wound me, do not let me hear its contents. I am too weak to endure any further excitement.”

Arthur opened the letter, and after running his eyes over it, said,

“My dearest sister, there is nothing in it but what

you ought to hear. I am sure it will do you good. I will read it to you."

The letter was as follows:

"To Miss Helen Wilmar:—Your conduct yesterday has convinced me that you are too good to deny me the privilege of thanking you for saving my life.—You are, indeed, my preserver; but, had it not been for my own hard-heartedness, you might have preserved me, not only to life, but to happiness and honour. I feel how deeply I have sinned, and how unpardonably and wilfully I have wronged you. Your noble conduct has heaped coals of fire upon my head; but I humbly hope that my future life of humility and penitence may show some portion of my bitter regret and repentance of the past. If I dared, at this solemn moment, to entertain a hope, it would be that, at some far distant day, when I have tested the sincerity of the change which the recent dreadful events have produced upon me, I might solicit the renewal of an acquaintance which has been the only bright spot in my perverted and unworthy existence. Oh, Helen!—Never did I feel, until now, how superior is your nature to mine, how much I did and still do love you, and what a priceless treasure I, in my reckless thoughtlessness, suffered to be snatched from me! I am not mean nor mercenary—I never was; and it was the influence of others, against my own inclination, that made me lose you. If I might dare to hope that one spark of your old affection mingled with the pity which made you come forward to save me, I would

gratefully devote my life to rekindle and nourish that sacred flame.

“I am completely changed. All my false and hollow enjoyments are stripped from me, and I feel myself desolate and heart-broken. Could I hope that I might ever be permitted to throw myself at your feet, to beg you to be mine, and to suffer me to devote my life to your happiness, I should deem that all I now endure, and even the remorse for the evil I have done to others, which now consumes me, was but a needed and salutary probation, to a calm and peaceful life.

“EDWARD INGRAHAM.”

“Too late! too late!” murmured Helen, as Arthur finished, sinking back on her pillow, whence she had half risen while he was reading, and covering her face with her thin and wasted hands. “Poor, poor Rosalie!”

At this moment, the well-known ring of Dr. Felton was heard, and directly after, his footsteps ascending the stairs. He greeted the family with his usual almost fatherly kindness, and there seemed to be an unusual expression of affection in the tones of his voice. He then proceeded to make himself acquainted with the state of his patient, and turned anxiously to her sisters for an explanation of what had happened.—They pointed in silence to the letter of Ingraham, which Arthur still held in his hand.

“Our best friend,” exclaimed Arthur; “we have no right to keep any thing from you, who have been our only counsellor and adviser, since the death of our father, and have supplied to us his place. Read this

letter, which came this morning, and which I had just been reading, when you arrived. I had thought it would have made my sister happy ; but you see the effect it has produced on her. If I had suspected this result, I would not have read it. What is to be done ? How is she, dear doctor ? ”

“ Fear nothing, Arthur,” said the doctor, cheerfully ; after he had read the letter ; “ This letter, by showing your sister that the man who has been the cause of her suffering, is not all bad, cannot, at least, do her any permanent harm. Nay, if there is yet time, it may be the means of restoring her to health and happiness. At all events it does honour to Edward Ingraham, and shows me that he is, after all, a man well worth saving. Cheer up, my daughter,” he continued, turning to Helen ; “ take a long breath, and a new and firm grasp on life—it may yet have many bright years in store for you ! I really do not think,” said he. after a pause, as if communing with himself, “ that it has gone so very far ! Surely, with the hope of a restoration to love and happiness, she can still be saved ! Oh, these lungs ! these lungs ! The first to attract to themselves, by sympathy, the ailments caused by the heart, they are the last to feel the healing influences that may have passed into the mind ! These lungs are terrible things ! ”

Aye, good doctor ! and I have sometimes been tempted to think, as I have seen the pale phantoms of consumption pass in never-ending procession to the everlasting shades, that the old dreamers of the past were

right—that the soul, or principle of life, does indeed reside in the lungs and vital viscera, and not in the brain, as modern savantism has so mathematically and geographically mapped and diagrammed it out. The “breath” of life, says the Holy writ—and where, in God’s new-created and beautiful creature, should have been the seat of the breath of life, but in those organs which, palpitating to and fro, drive the exquisite machine along? Every physician knows that a great majority of those deaths which, in his impotency to minister to a mind diseased, he classes as “consumption,” are the result of some secret sorrow of the mind or the affections, acting upon a feeble and unresisting nature, and how many others, of whose secret sorrow neither friend nor physician ever knows, die from the same cause? Yes, yes, good doctor—you are right! These lungs are terrible things!

“And now, my children,” said the doctor, while a smile of almost supernatural goodness irradiated his face; “I have a most agreeable and important communication to make to you. But it, must be done in the presence of your mother. How is she this morning?”

“Oh, doctor,” said Emma, “I really thought, this morning, that she seemed to be better. Her eyes had more expression; and as I kissed her lifeless hand, she looked at me as if she were going to speak.”

“The hour, then, has arrived!” murmured the doctor, as if to himself. “Mysterious are thy ways, oh Providence!” Then, after a pause, he turned to the

bed of the sick girl.—“Does my little Helen, here, not feel strong enough to be wheeled in her chair into her mother’s room? What I have to say, will give too much happiness to all, for any of you to be absent.”

“Oh yes, doctor,” replied Helen, who had mastered her emotions and grown calm again. “I even think I might walk to mamma’s room.”

“No, no—I shall not allow that. But come, girls, get your sister ready, while Arthur and I go down stairs. I feel as if a cup of coffee would not do me any harm, as I have been riding around the city ever since daylight, and have had no breakfast.”

Kate volunteered to go with them and make the coffee, while Helen was left in charge of Emma.

In a few minutes they returned up stairs, to the chamber of Mrs. Wilmar, where Emma had already conveyed her sister. The pale and suffering daughter, sat by the side of her bed, holding her mother’s hand, while the mother’s eyes were fixed upon her child with an expression of love and tenderness, and an intelligence that had long been absent from them.

The doctor, as he greeted her, watched the change in her appearance with a double interest—that of the friend and of the physician.

“My dear friend,” he said, “I think you feel yourself changed, to-day, do you not?”

She looked at him intently, as if she were striving with all her remaining energies, to speak. They even thought her lips moved! But it was doubtless a mere

momentary spasm of the muscles: no sound proceeded from that mouth, so long silent.

"Mrs. Wilmar," resumed the doctor; "What I am about to tell you is of the very greatest interest to you, as affecting the destiny of your children. Prepare yourself, therefore,—and you, also," he continued, turning to the group that had gathered around him; "you are about to be most pleasantly surprised. But I will not keep you any longer in suspense. Know, then, my children, that you are once more rich. Yes—your father's fortune, undiminished by a dollar, is now your own again. It was never lost, as we were told by Henderson. He fraudulently appropriated it, and by the connivance of SpeARBILL, deceived our easy credulity. I blame myself severely for not having been more thorough in my investigations into the matter—but who could for a moment suspect two men standing so high in the world's esteem, of such a gigantic piece of fraud and robbery? For it was no less. And to this dear girl here," he continued, pointing to Helen; "you owe it all. Suspecting, from what she said Henderson had told her, in offering to restore your fortune if she would sell herself to him, that there might be a reason for that particular offer to have been uppermost in his mind, I went to see him in prison. After a long and severe struggle, at length, overcome by terror at the fear of being condemned to death—as he certainly would have been, as well as InGRAHAM, but for Helen's testimony—the old sinner confessed. I made him give me the necessary written au-

thority to take immediate possession of the property—and there,” added the doctor, producing from his pocket, a portfolio of leather, evidently crammed with papers, “there it is, all in bank bills and certificates of stock, all perfectly straight and regular. Take it, Arthur—you are now the representative of your father, the trustee of your mother’s fortune, and the guardian of your sisters.—Take it—and may God bless you all, and make you happy!”

As he concluded, the old man’s voice grew husky, and the tears gushed plenteously from his eyes.

The effect of this communication was different upon every member of the family, thus suddenly and unexpectedly restored to wealth. Arthur’s eyes sparkled, his face flushed, and he rushed to the window, fumbling for his handkerchief, and scarce knowing what he was about. Kate danced and capered about the room like mad; and Emma, kneeling at the doctor’s feet, took his hand and kissed it, in a transport of thankfulness.

Helen, whose eyes had been steadfastly fixed upon the doctor, while he was making his explanation, rose to her feet, as he finished, and swaying to and fro for a moment, like a lily leaning to the wind, threw herself upon her mother’s breast.

But the most wonderful effect of this announcement was that produced upon the mother herself. As the doctor ceased speaking, she raised her hands to heaven, and for the first time in many years, that beloved voice thrilled the hearts of her children.

“God!” she exclaimed, in a fervent and clear tone; “I thank thee! Now am I ready to meet my husband!—My children! Emma! Kate! Arthur! my own darling Helen! Dr. Felton! God bless you all!—Farewell!” and her hands fell again by her side—the light passed from her eyes—a shadow crept coldly over her wan and attenuated face. Mother and father were reunited in heaven.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE UNLUCKY INTERRUPTION

FROM the house of the dead, his heart heavy with sorrow, and a dark foreboding of coming evil overshadowing his spirit, Arthur Wilmar took his way. He thought not of the riches that had just been restored to him. Riches? What were they? His mother was dead—his youngest and darling sister, the light and joy of the household, was dying—and she, the glorious being who had inspired his very dreams with love, and whose image mingled with every gloomy and disheartening scene—she, whose every accent and look pierced him with a fresh agony of love—had offered him only the calm, frank, sincerity of sisterly affection, when he was panting with delirious passion, that longed to strain her to his burning bosom, and incorporate her life with his!—What a mockery, then, was his new-found wealth! What cruel mockery, too, of her, the bright and peerless, thus to have awakened his young spirit from its peaceful sleep—to have flown with him to the topmost mountain height of hope, to have thence

shown him the whole beautiful and glorious world—and then, smiling, dashed him down again! Oh, that the peaceful, happy days of ignorance and poverty were once more his! The humble home—the loving looks that greeted him when he returned to it, and went with him when he departed—the midnight toil over the precious dreams of art, that gradually, one by one, were wrought to shape beneath his fingers—they were gone, all gone. He had no more heart to work, or dream, or hope. *She* had filled the horizon of his soul—her love had become the sunlight of his existence. That withdrawn, all was cold, and dark, and dreary,—life, without her, no longer had hope or object. It all seemed a bitter mockery.

All who have truly loved, have felt thus. There are many kinds of love: the love that gradually ripens from friendship and youthful association—pure and sweet, but leaving an unsatisfied craving in large natures: the love growing from gratitude, and grafted strong upon a sensitive disposition—loyal and firm, but calm and unexacting: the love that springs from pity, from the abstract pleasure of being beloved, and from the duty that benevolent souls feel to make others happy, forbearing, kind, sustaining, and tender.

But before, beyond, above, all these—pinnacled in the height of infinity, yet rooted deep in the heart, in the blood, in the senses—intoxicating the soul, making the brain delirious, and the body sick with passion—is the love of a man of genius, first awakened by the electric touch of her who is his destiny. From

that moment, there is no other world, no other life, for him. Others may feel grief, and disappointment, and despair—and time will heal their wounds, will sooth their sorrows, and finally restore them to themselves and life. But for him, this is the crisis that decides his fate forever, both in life and in eternity—for, without her, life would be a torture, heaven a hell. God, in first giving him the infinite capacity of such a love, and then revealing to him its object, has exhausted His creative power of endowment: nothing that even He could give can compensate for the want of that object: lacking it, the human soul defies and contemns heaven that has thus mocked him, and becomes a demon. Genius knows and feels this by intuition—and thus it is, that men of genius have ever hazarded all, every thing, earth, mankind, and heaven, rather than sacrifice this love, or lose their hold upon its object.

Thus it was with Arthur Wilmar, as he took his way to Mrs. Loftus', where he had not been for several days—kept away by the absorbing events we have narrated in the last two chapters.

He rang the bell. Madame de Saintlieu had gone! "Gone!" he repeated mechanically to the servant. "But she will return?"

The servant did not know—he would inquire.

In a few minutes he returned. Madame de Saintlieu, he said, no longer was staying with his mistress—she had gone to visit Mrs. Attarby, for a few days.—Would Mr. Wilmar walk in?

A cold chill fell upon the young man—his eyes grew

dim—his hands were clammy—his knees trembled. He motioned to the servant, who shut the door, and staggered down the steps. He knew not what he feared—but still he feared. It was as if all had changed—as if *she* were changed: and he caught up in his memory the many dear and delightful interviews in that stately old drawing-room, as if they and the dream they nourished were passing away forever. She had gone, and sent him no word, no permission to follow her! Perhaps she was angry at his unusual absence? No—that could not be, for she well knew the causes of it. Would she ever see him again? Was his fate already decided? He must know the worst! And, as he sped furiculy along towards the house of Mrs. Attarby, once more came back to him the picture of his humble, laborious, peaceful, life, before this wild vision broke upon him. Enchantress! She had raised the spell, and left to him but its madness!

At length—for the way seemed miles—he arrived, faint, panting, and desperate.

She was not at home, but would return soon, she had directed the servant to say, if any one called. He went in and sat down in the drawing-room—no one was there. He tried to decide in his own mind, the sofa, upon which she usually sat—the table where she might have laid her arm—he interrogated the very light that came through the heavily-curtained windows, as to where and in what attitude it found her. A fresh bouquet stood on a little table very near him, almost touching his elbow. He started, as if an asp had crept

from its smiling leaves, and stung him! And yet, it might not have been for *her*. He got up, and went to the piano. There were several pieces of music scattered around, and one, still open, on the desk of the instrument, just as the singer had left it. He eagerly turned them over—he did not recognise one of them—she had never sung him these! And the piece on the piano—it was a *duett* for a masculine and a feminine voice! But this music might not be hers? Alas, yes—her name was written on the margin of several of the pieces, and especially on this terrible duett. How he trembled!

Poor boy! Was he not madly in love? were not life and death in such a passion?

How long he sat there, he knew not; but, measured by thoughts and emotions, it was half a life. And the other—where was that? Would it ever come back to him? or was all nothing?

At last they returned—Mrs. Attarby and Felice—*his* Felice—accompanied by a gentleman he had never seen before. He was a tall, superb, stately-looking man, calm and confident, as if he had been used to conquer every where, to see all obstacles disappear before him. They were laughing and talking gaily—he had never seen Felice so animated, so excited, so brilliant. He would have given worlds to have rushed to her, to have thrown himself at her feet.—But alas! all was cold and formal. The introduction of a stranger had broken the spell of their joyousness—all came back instantly to the cold formality of real every-day life.

Madame de Saintlieu greeted him kindly, Mrs. Attarby cordially,—and then he was presented duly to Captain Wallingford, who had just returned from the Mediterranean, and whom he had never before seen.

Mrs. Attarby came and talked with him about music, about his new compositions, about the famous *nocturne* he had played at Mrs. Valentine's concert, and of which every body had told her so much. She hoped that now she had gotten Madame de Saintlieu safe with her, she should some time have the pleasure of hearing it. He answered awkwardly, and at random, and his eyes wandered uneasily to Felice, who was chatting with Captain Wallingford, in that doubtful drawing-room tone, which may or may not be construed particular and personal, according as the listener may or may not be in love with one of the parties. He felt himself grow pale—his voice was choked—he could scarcely speak.

At length, Captain Wallingford rose, took his leave—lingering a moment, (at least Wilmar thought so) over her hand, as she half rose and gave him the tips of her fingers. He shook hands cordially with Mrs. Attarby, in the American fashion, and bowed slightly, but civilly, to Wilmar, who almost forgot to return his salutation, then rising suddenly, came forward in confusion, held out his hand, and returned to his seat. Wallingford looked at him a moment with a well-bred stare, and then went out. Mrs. Attarby, begging to be excused for a moment, shortly afterwards went up stairs, as she said, to look after some things that she

had ordered to be sent home in the morning—and Felice and Wilmar were alone.

“What is the matter my dear friend?” said she, coming up to him, in a frank, unembarrassed way, and laying her hand softly on his shoulder.

He shuddered and was silent.

“I fear you are ill—you really look so. Has any thing happened? How is your sister Helen? In the confusion of my removing here, I have neglected to come to her. I hope she is better. But you—you look really ill. What is the matter?”

“I have so longed to see you,—so many strange and sad things have happened! My heart was too full—I felt as if the world were gliding away from beneath my feet. I could not stay away any longer!”

“And why have you staid away so long? I have been expecting to see you. But then, the trial, and the illness of poor Helen—I should have gone to see her, and I have thought of her every day—but then”—

“Then what?” asked Arthur eagerly, seeing that she hesitated, and blushed—only a little, yet, to a lover’s eye, very perceptibly. “Oh Felice!—Madame de Saintlieu, I mean! Forgive me! Do not be angry with me! I am very unhappy!”

“My child, what indeed has happened?” she inquired, in a tone of sincere and unmistakeable interest. “Tell me every thing. Am I not your friend?”

“I will tell you—I must tell you—every thing that

is burning in my heart, and pressing the life out of it. I will be calm—I will know my fate! Felice, I love you—I am dying for you! Hear me out! Do not interrupt me—at least, not yet. Within this hour, I have fled from my home, leaving the corpse of my dead mother, and my sister perhaps dying at this very moment. I could not help it—I should have died to have remained away from you another day. Felice, I am rich! All our fortune has this very day been restored to us. I am no longer a poor struggling adventurer—a wandering artist. Dr. Felton came to announce to us, this morning, that my father's fortune had been recovered from Mr. Henderson, who had appropriated it to himself, and falsely given out that it had been lost, by the breaking of the bank, years ago, where it was deposited. But this news killed my mother, with joy. It seemed she had staid on earth only to see her children saved from poverty and want—and then she hastened to rejoin her husband. Poor Helen, too, is fearfully overcome, and I do not even hope that she will live. In this strange hour, Felice, my heart is dead to all but one emotion—love for you. Oh, can you not love me? See—I throw my life at your feet! No man ever loved woman, as I love and worship you! Oh, take me! Save me! Be my guide—my angel—my wife!" And as he thus, in broken sentences, poured out his soul, he caught her hand, he knelt at her feet, and wept like a child.

"Arthur, Arthur! For Heaven's sake, rise and

compose yourself! Remember where we are! Mrs. Attarby may return every moment! Be calm, my child, and listen to me! I implore you to be calm—can you refuse?”

“Speak, speak!” said he, staggering to a sofa, and burying his face in his hands. “I came to hear my doom—I must know it. Do not torture me! Is there no hope?”

“I did not say that, naughty boy!” she replied, in a tone of assumed playfulness, and striving to regain her own composure, which had for a moment been overcome by his earnestness and impetuosity. “Now be yourself, dear Arthur—for you are indeed dear to me: and listen calmly. I know and feel you love me well—better, dear Arthur, than I now deserve—for I do not so love you! I once thought—but, no matter—I was mistaken. I must be true to myself, as well as to you. It would be a great wrong were I, in pity for your sufferings, to tell you any thing of my own feelings that was not exactly true. I hoped you would have spared me this trial—I had hoped that our pleasant and delightful friendship was to go on uninterrupted by such violent demonstrations. But it is not too late. I might have loved you—I may love you—nay, I am almost certain I shall, dear Arthur! Only, you must not drive me! I am afraid I am very obstinate and self-willed! Do not think I am trifling with you, Arthur,” she continued in a graver tone, as she saw how much she pained him. “Indeed, I set full value on your true and noble love. And I will

confess to you, that my heart has yearned for such a love, and well knows how to appreciate and respond to it. Still, I must not now accept it, without qualification or condition. Your heart is now agitated by many emotions—grief for your mother—anxiety for your sister. Let all be between us as it was before, for yet a little while. Let us grow calm, and hope, dear Arthur!”

“And is this all there is in your heart to say to me?”

“No, not all. You are an artist—you have genius—you have ambition. Give way to your inspirations—pursue your career. Go to Europe, and study—mix in the world. You will see there many women far, far superior to me. Try your own heart—be sure of yourself. Then, when you return, if”——

“Will you then be mine? Promise me!—oh, swear it to me—and I will bless you, dear Felice!”

“There is no need of promises or oaths, Arthur. If you no longer loved me,—or if I should have changed,—we neither of us could stoop to accept cold and unreal vows from the other. Trust to yourself—to love—and to Felice.”

“And you wish me to go away from you—to see you no more for a whole year! Ah! you do not love me!—I see! I see! My life is accursed!”

He said this with indescribable bitterness; and rising, strode to the door, exclaiming,

“Farewell! farewell!”

"No, no!" she cried; "we must not part thus! Arthur! dear Arthur! Come back!"

Arthur turned—the light of hope once more gleamed in his eyes—she was almost conquered. How could she resist so earnest, so overwhelming a passion, which she more than half returned? She held out her hand, which he sprang to seize—but ere it had reached his burning lips, the voice of Mrs. Attarby was heard, as she entered the back drawing-room.

"Madame de Saintlieu," she said, "don't forget to engage Mr. Wilmar to come and play us his *nocturne* next Sunday evening. Captain Wallingford has promised to be here, and some others."

"Come in madam, and ask him yourself—he was just going, when you called."

"Oh, I'm so busy! They have not sent one of my packages, and I have had to despatch John after them. I'm in a vile temper, Mr. Wilmar," she continued, coming in through the *coulisses* that separated the two rooms. "But do promise to come!"

"I cannot promise, madam," gasped poor Wilmar, utterly unable to command himself. "I came but to acquaint Madame de Saintlieu, as an old friend, with a heavy domestic affliction, of whose nature I beg her to inform you. Having done so, I must ask permission to take my leave."

He bowed, and again found his way mechanically to the door. This time no voice called him back. He opened the front door—it closed behind him—and he was alone!

“So, so, my friend!” said Mrs. Attarby in a rallying voice; “there’s mysteries, an’ you will! as poor Launcelot Gobbo says. I hope I spoiled no sport by my untimely view halloo!”

“How absurd you are!” said Felice, in a pretty tone of vexation. “The poor boy has just lost his mother, and I fear his sister will not stay long. She is dying of a broken heart, for love. A terrible death, is it not, my friend?”

“On the contrary, the most desirable of all deaths—for then one is not compelled to discover how unworthily he had bestowed himself.”

“But Helen Wilmar has already discovered that she loved Edward Ingraham.”

“What, Mrs. Valentine’s graceless nephew! What a weak spirit she must have, to die for such a creature!”

“Or rather, what a strong heart!” replied Felice, as if greatly moved. “But tell me, my friend, you that have made the passions the study of your life; what do you think love really is? Is it sympathy, or pity, or admiration, or”——

“Desire! That is it, in one word. But the proprieties require that society should assiduously deceive and cheat itself. It dares not own the truth.—But if you would know what I *did* think love was, wait and read the evidence in my divorce trial, which I hear will be produced next season, as the managers say.—Heigho! Come, let’s be merry!”

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CASTLE IN THE MOON.

WE must now explain why Madame de Saintlieu had left the house of Mrs. Loftus, and how it was that Arthur had found her domiciled with Mrs. Attarby.—Madame de Saintlieu had found a congenial spirit in the witty and audacious actress; and although her own taste and refinement of manners would not have permitted her to indulge in the various caprices with which her new friend was in the habit of amusing herself, yet she had sufficient *esprit* and love of innocent mischief, fully to sympathize with the spirit that dictated them. Having learned from Mrs. Loftus herself, that no acts of immorality had ever been preferred against Mrs. Attarby, she saw no reason why she should not escape from the stiff formality which reigned in Mrs. Loftus' establishment, and the stupid monotony of the pasteboard routine of acquaintance which had been vouchsafed her by the fashionable acquaintances of Mrs. Valentine and her set. The acquaintanceship between Madame de Saintlieu and the independent actress, rapidly grew into friendship,

and they were almost continually together. Mrs. Loftus had once or twice remonstrated with her guest, in rather warm terms. But she had replied that, if any charge of immorality were established against her new friend, she would give her up. Until that was done, she did not feel that it would be any thing short of cowardice to do so.

Meanwhile, the position of Mrs. Attarby had undergone a change, which, in the eyes of Madame de Saintlieu, would have rendered a desertion of her, absolutely base and mean—and her firm and just spirit rose against it, and determined her, at all events, to continue her intimacy with her new friend, now that it might be even serviceable to her.

After the scene at Mrs. Henderson's, the various cliques and sets of "good society" came to the unanimous decision that this was a favourable opportunity of venting their spleen upon Mrs. Attarby for the innumerable slights and mortifications which they had suffered at her hands, and to put her definitely in Coventry. For this purpose, Mrs. Glacée and her immediate friends, to whose circle Mr. Attarby had originally belonged, bent all their energies to increase the irritation he already entertained against his wife, and to induce him to separate himself from her, formally, and commence proceedings for a divorce. He at last consented; and immediately all those social and political influences, which make "society" omnipotent for good or evil, when it has decided to act in concert, were set to work.

Judges, magistrates, and legislators, who depend upon the breath of popularity for their own positions, are seldom just or courageous enough to resist a popular outcry—especially if it is taken up by the “first families,” who give tone to the classes beneath, who fear, worship and ape them, while pretending to despise them. Nothing is so venal, so brutal, so despotic, as the social or political “public opinion” of a democracy. Blind and sycophantic, it is ever glad of a victim to offer up as an expiation of its own vices, and a palliative of its own self-contempt. Mediocrity is powerful only by being banded together, and mutually supporting its members, against any daring innovator upon its realm. Perpetually harassed by its own petty squabbles and rivalries, yet it knows its weakness, and instantly forgets or suspends its minor differences, and unites unanimously against a common foe.

This was the cold-blooded, cautious, remorseless and malignant foe, whom Mrs. Attarby had habitually provoked, and who was now about to throw off the mask and commence unrelenting warfare upon her. Her indifference and disdain of all around her, rendered her blind to all these occult elements of the contest in which she was engaged; and she felt strong enough to defy the whole world into which, through her marriage, she had entered. The worst that could happen to her—thus she reasoned—was its entire loss; and that would rather amuse than annoy her.

But Mrs. Attarby overlooked the main fact in her

position—the terrible and crushing power of calumny. It is not enough that “society” beats down its victims—it never leaves them until it has so fouled them over with slander and calumny, that the cowardly world beyond dares not approach them.

Mrs. Loftus, who understood while she despised the society in which she moved, knew and felt all this; and she knew, besides, that Madame de Saintlieu, whom she really esteemed, by persisting in her intimacy with Mrs. Attarby, would inevitably be included in her fate. Already the discovery of her relation to “the little French grisette,” Rosalie de Morny, had caused several of her former patronesses to shrug their shoulders and avert their countenances. Mrs. Valentine had even been heard to declare that she had no reason for supposing that Madame de Saintlieu, as she chose to call herself, was what she pretended to be. Mrs. Glacée was sure that her turning out to be the aunt of a little naughty French shop-girl wasn’t much in her favour—and Mrs. Balderskin wondered that they had not noticed the very evident intimacy that existed between her and Wilmar, the pianist.—Certainly nothing could be lower or more vulgar, than falling in love with an artist!

Miss Jemima Jenkins, who had been admitted to this grand female divan on the character and fate of Madame de Saintlieu, scarcely waited, in her impatience to spread the news, to hear its final decision—which was, quietly and politely, (every thing in good

society is done quietly and politely,) to withdraw their countenance and protection from Madame de Saint-lieu, and suffer her gently to subside into obscurity.

"I am sure," said Jemima, with a most virtuous blush of indignation; "there is no use in seeking for reasons. Is it not notorious that she is almost constantly with that Mrs. Attarby? That, I should think, was enough to stamp her character."

"Is that so?—I was not aware of it," said Mrs. Glacée.

"Fact—I saw them myself, yesterday, in Mrs. Attarby's carriage," said Jemima. "They both had the impudence to nod and laugh at me, as they went by; but you may be sure I did not return it."

"This intimacy, then," said Mrs. Balderskin, with an air of horrified virtue, "settles the affair. I suppose we shall have Mrs. Captain Wallingford to attend to next. What has become of her, I wonder? She's quite as bad as the others."

"Oh, worse—a great deal worse!" exclaimed Jemima; "I can tell you all about that. Her husband has just got back from the Mediterranean; and on hearing of all the pranks she had been playing, immediately sent her off to her friends in the country. He found her at Mrs. Attarby's. They had a terrible scene—crying, cursing, and all that. And the funniest part is, that the captain is a constant visiter at Mrs. Attarby's, and goes out almost every day with her and Madame, dividing his attentions pretty equally between them."

“No wonder he wanted his wife out of the way!” suggested Mrs. Glacée, maliciously.

“A pretty set, certainly!” said Mrs. Balderskin, “to thrust themselves into good society! It is high time to get rid of them all!” And so the conference broke up.

Jemima’s first visit, with her bran new budget of news, was to Mrs. Loftus.

“My dear Mrs. Loftus,” exclaimed she, breathless with her speed, as she rushed into the little back drawing-room, which Mrs. Loftus used for her own private sitting-room; “what do you think! I have just come from Mrs. Glacée’s, and they have all had a meeting, and determined to give up Madame de Saintlieu—if that is, indeed, her name. I thought you would be glad to hear the news, and so I made it a duty to come off directly and tell you.”

“They? who?—Give up Madame de Saintlieu!—Why, what does all this mean?”

“Why, Mrs. Glacée, and Mrs. Balderskin, and all of them of our set, you know. They think it isn’t becoming in good society to patronize the relative of a French shop-girl, who was killed in a—you know, a house!”

“No, I don’t know,” said Mrs. Loftus; “but go on!”

“And then, her intimacy with Mrs. Attarby, whom now nobody pretends to speak to, since she has become almost as good as a *divorcée*, you know!”

“Well!—and what of Mrs. Valentine?”

"Oh, she gives her up, decidedly. She was the first to see the necessity of it."

"A notable synod of purity and virtue, truly!" said Mrs. Loftus, ironically. "And you, Miss Jenkins—I suppose you fully subscribe this verdict of condemnation against Madame de Saintlieu?"

"Oh, yes—you see—society must be careful of who it admits into its bosom, you know, Mrs. Loftus!—There are so many impostors and adventurers"—

"Stop!—Not another word, Miss Jenkins! Nor do I thank you for your visit. Let me tell you, however, since you are here, that Madame de Saintlieu is my friend. I introduced her into the immaculate circle of your friends, and I am a guarantee for her character. Indeed, if the truth must be told, I only hesitated because I knew how unworthy *they* were of the friendship of such a woman. You can tell them so as soon as you please. And tell them, too, that they must include me in their proscription. I shall not feel honoured by having my threshold crossed by any of those who have conspired against *my* friend. Good day, Miss Jenkins!"

"Stop, stop!" said Madame de Saintlieu, coming in from the front drawing-room. "I have heard all. I had just come in; and I was so weak and foolish that Miss Jenkins' first words unnerved me, and I could not avoid hearing all she said, and your noble reply. But it cannot be, my worthy friend! Never will I consent to see you sacrificed for me! I will leave you this very day."

“Sacrificed!—Who talks of sacrifices? What do I want of them?—What do I care for them?—They are nothing to me.—Go, Miss Jenkins—you have made mischief enough!—Go!”

Jemima did not stay for another invitation; but gathering up her scarf, and just waiting to dispose it fascinatingly from her shoulders, departed—glad to escape what she vaguely imagined might become a scene rather disagreeable to her.

“Now, my dear friend,” said Mrs. Loftus, going up to Madame de Saintlieu, and kissing her cheek with true motherly affection; “dismiss that angry flush from your face, and the fire from your eyes! Do not let us be disturbed by the chattering of such a magpie as that. Are we not friends?—Do I not know you? And for Mrs. Valentine and her set—why they are as tainted in morals as they are underbred and overdressed. What do I care for them? Nor shall you, either! We can both afford to despise them.”

“You are indeed my friend,” said Madame de Saintlieu, weeping freely. “Never shall I forget your kindness. But you must not ask me to stay with you—I could no longer respect myself, if I did so. To-morrow, at the latest, my dear Mrs. Loftus, I will leave your house; but let me continue to dwell in your heart—I will never prove unworthy—never!”

“Hush, child—don’t agitate yourself about such a set of veritable *canaille*. Come up stairs and see your little Marie. She has been complaining sadly, and I fear we must send for Dr. Felton.”

The mother's heart took the alarm. Forgetting every thing but her child, she hurried up stairs.

The next morning, while the two ladies were at breakfast, Mrs. Loftus still trying to dissuade her friend from her settled purpose, a note was brought to Madame de Saintlieu, which had just been left at the door, while the messenger waited for an answer.— Begging permission to read it, she opened it and read as follows :

“My dear Madame:—Thanks to that living evening paper, called the *Jemima*, I have heard all about the grand conclave at Mrs. Glacée's, and your interview with Mrs. Loftus and Miss Jenkins. I am now absolutely alone:— Captain Wallingford has come home from sea, and banished his wife to the country—Mr. Attarby is about divorcing me,—and you can imagine how disconsolate I am. If Mrs. Loftus can consent to consign you to me, I will engage not to corrupt your morals nor compromise your character, but will be in all things *convenable*—as I never would consent to be, when it would have been of service to me. I sincerely and earnestly hope that you will come. I am dying of *ennui*, and I am sure that we can amuse and profit one another. If you will come, send me word by the messenger, and I will come and fetch you off in triumph. Ever yours,

“PAULINE ATTARBY.”

Madame de Saintlieu read this note in silence—then, begging to be excused for a moment, hurried to her own room—wrote simply—“I will come—fetch

me at three," and directing it to Mrs. Attarby, gave it herself to the messenger in the hall, and re-entered the breakfast-room.

"There, my dear friend," said she to Mrs. Loftus, "I have settled it all, and put farther friendly resistance out of your power. I have just answered this in the affirmative"—and she laid Mrs. Attarby's invitation on the table.

"It is cordial and sincere," said Mrs. Loftus, after she had read it; "and I do not doubt you will enjoy yourself much better there, than in my gloomy old Doubting Castle here. I shall not oppose it any farther. Only—remember, that, if at any time or from any cause, you find it convenient to leave Mrs. Attarby, you will at once, without any ceremony, return to me. Your little apartment shall be kept ready for you, so that you may take possession of it at a moment's notice."

"Oh, how shall I thank you, how repay you!" said Felice, while tears of gratitude and affection rose unbidden to her eyes.

"By being happy, and making others so," said Mrs. Loftus, kissing her tenderly.

At three o'clock, precisely, Mrs. Attarby came for her new guests—and little Marie having entirely recovered from her yesterday's debauch on *bon bons*, they were all ready. Mrs. Attarby, however, was not alone: a tall, handsome man, with a free, jovial countenance, and an easy, travelled air, attended her, and was introduced as Captain Wallingford.—Merely

exchanging the necessary greetings with Mrs. Loftus and Madame de Saintlieu, he fell to playing at once with the children, with all the freedom and abandonment of a romping school-boy, or a Newfoundland dog. They were not in the least shy—contrary to their usual habit, which was the excess of timidity and reserve. In less than five minutes they were romping and laughing as merrily with their new acquaintance, as if they had known him all their little lives.

“Oh, I am so glad you let me come, Mrs. Attarby!” exclaimed Wallingford, as he threw the youngest girl to the ceiling, and jumped the other as high as his head. “We’ll have famous times—won’t we darlings! There—run and tell mamma that she must forgive me for my rudeness, because I love you so very much.”

“Mamma!” said the youngest, toddling off, and looking like a flower holding up its face to be looked at; “you must forgive ye genplum, betause he loves you so very much!”

The mother and the stranger laughed, as their eyes met; and all embarrassment was instantly at an end: or rather, there was something so inexpressibly winning in the fresh and unstudied frankness of the stranger, that embarrassment was out of the question. He seemed to have brought with him the gay, bright, laughing atmosphere of the Mediterranean.

At last the leave-taking was over; and promising to come and see her friend soon, Madame de Saintlieu pressed the hand of Mrs. Loftus, and was handed to the carriage by the attentive Captain. Then he

tossed in the children, who screamed with delight at their new friend; and, bestowing Mrs. Attarby inside, observed that they were "all full," and that he would walk about his business.

This was objected to by all the ladies—especially by the small ones, who protested that they could sit "away up in this little corner," so that there would be plenty of room.

"We'll soon settle that part of the business, since it must be so!" said he, getting in, and taking the little ladies aforesaid, one on each knee. "I must beg you, however," he added, "to let me be set down at Chestnut street, where I am obliged to stop. If you will permit me, I will do myself the honour of calling to-morrow, to ask my new friends here how they like their new hostess. If you don't like her, my dears," he continued, "you must tell me to-morrow, when I come, and I'll take you away directly to a grand castle in the moon, built of sugar-plums and rock candy."

"Oh, won't that be nice!" exclaimed both the small ladies, while their eyes sparkled with pleasure and anticipation.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CROSS.

WALLINGFORD was an extraordinary character. He was the personification of joyousness. He brought sunshine and smiles wherever he came. He was not a genius; but he was a thorough appreciator of all forms of genius in others—and clever people, especially clever women, are more grateful for appreciation than for worship. Worship is too silent, too timid, too unobtrusive—even sometimes it is *mal à propos*! It requires the worshipped one to keep her faculties continually on the strain! But appreciation and admiration are the wholesome and necessary stimulants of daily existence. In short, the patriarchs of the Pentateuch were right, in this, as in so many other matters: worship should be paid only to God. And yet no man of genius ever truly loved, who did *not* worship.

But Captain Wallingford, as we have said, was not a man of genius; he was simply a gay, gallant, noble-hearted, dashing fellow, who went through the world with all his senses wide awake, prepared to drink in all the enjoyment that offered, in a moderate way, to

any of them. He was liked by men, a favourite with women, and adored by children.

This latter reason, doubtless, it principally was, that made him come every day to Mrs. Attarby's; and yet he often staid far into the evening, long after his pets, sleepy with fun, had gone to their dreams, wishing mamma and the captain good night, and leaving them to theirs!

The ladies were both almost as much delighted with the captain as were the children. He chatted so pleasantly about all he had just left in Europe—of Naples, and Milan, and the beautiful shores of the Mediterranean—of every thing that carried back the mind of Felice to her happy days, and took her out of the present. Then they sang duetts—for Wallingford was a good musician, and had a not indifferent voice—while Mrs. Attarby read, or played audience—and then, a little later, they had lunch, in the half-lighted back drawing-room,—a cold pheasant (Pennsylvania pheasant, we mean, reader—*anglicé*, ruffed grouse,) a bottle of champagne, and conversation that outsparkled the wine, and, like it, sent an electric stimulus to the brain—and then good night!

Oh, rare and precious relief from all the platitudes, the conventionalisms, the stupidity, the ennui, of “good society!” no wonder that poor Felice, breathing once more a congenial atmosphere, felt her nature expand, forgot all the gossip and clamour without, and gave herself up to two alternating emotions—the pleasure of Wallingford's society, when he was pre-

sent, and the sweet solicitude of expecting him, when he was absent.

She thought sometimes of Arthur, and wondered why he did not come to see her. But probably he was very busy—or perhaps, she said to herself, with bitterness, he had joined with her enemies, or did not feel interest enough in her, or was not strong enough to resist the current. It is true, her heart accused her of injustice at this; but she had, after all, no available means of deciding the question, and—and—the bell rang, and she forgot all about it! Wallingford had come!

A day or two before the trial of Henderson and Ingraham was to come on, Mrs. Attarby came into her room, early in the morning, laughing and clapping her hands with glee.

“Huzza!” she cried, snatching the lace-filled night-cap from her head and throwing it in the air, while her glossy black hair fell in waves over her shoulders and bosom, from which her energetic gesture had displaced the loose dressing-gown she had but half put on; “huzza! We have got a champion—or rather, you have got a champion, my dear Felice—worthy of Ashby de la Zouche, or the fervent sand-plains of the Diamond of the Desert.* I have just had the story from Susan, who got it from the laundress, whose husband is the hair-dresser at Jones’—so you see that it is on the most unquestionable authority. Oh, it’s a capital affair!”

* See Scott’s “Talisman.”—AUTHOR.

“But what is it?” said Madame de Saintlieu, quietly, putting her naked feet into a pair of minute slippers, and throwing a peignior round her glistening shoulders as she stepped out of the shower-bath.

“What is it? Why, thus it runs. Last night, a company of our *jeunesse dorée* were collected at Jones’, discussing the all-absorbing topics of Mrs. Attarby and her new friend the French madame, when a gentleman—who was of the party—ventured to remark that he of course had nothing to say of me, in that place,—the careful, worthy man!—but that, as for her friend, that Frenchwoman, he believed she was a ——”

“A what?” inquired our champion, very quietly coming forward.

“What is that to you, sir? I say she is a ——” But we shall never know *what* the gentleman thinks you are; for before he could get any further in his alphabet, our champion coolly doubles up his fist and knocks him down! Isn’t it delightful?”

“But who is this champion?” asked Felice, colouring to the temples, and trying to look innocent of all idea on the subject.

“Oh, I don’t know that!” exclaimed the other, laughing; “but I’ll ask Captain Wallingford, this afternoon, when he comes. Perhaps he may have heard something about it!—There! You needn’t kick your slipper into the child’s crib, so spitefully! It is a pretty foot, though! I shall positively fall desperately in love with you, one of these days! But come,

put your feet into your stockings, restore your banished slipper to favour, and come to breakfast ——” and she ran off, singing, “Oh, the days when we went gipsying, long time ago!”

Poor Arthur! He never had knocked down any body for Felice—nor do I believe, that if the opportunity had offered, he would have managed to come off with *éclat* in the undertaking. It is true, that he would have cheerfully been knocked down for her, a dozen times—or if need be, he would have died without a murmur, to give her happiness, or defend her from injury. But there would have been nothing brilliant in that. But to knock down a man that abuses you! What woman can resist it? Such a blow does execution upon her, as well as upon her slanderer!

And yet, Captain Wallingford had never spoken of love to Madame de Saintlieu. She would have been startled and awakened at the first syllable, had he ventured upon it. She knew he was a married man—separated from his wife, it was true, but still her husband. And she fully believed, what Mrs. Attarby had assured her—that Mrs. Wallingford was entirely innocent, and had been basely and foully slandered to her husband. She had even determined to make use of any little influence she might have acquired over him, to induce him to receive her back, and listen to her justification. She would still do so—she would speak of the subject to him that very day!

But somehow, something occurred—I know not exactly how it was, nor what occurred—to prevent her

speaking about his wife, that day, to the captain, although he conversed with her a long time on many other subjects—especially of Italy, and the beautiful climate, and the lovely and peaceful life two people might lead there, so that they but truly loved. And yet, although her cheek glowed with the tints of that Italian sky at morning, and her heart beat with wild, sweet throbs, to which she would not listen, yet could not still—he spoke no word of love to her.

Poor Arthur!

In the midst of this sweet and dangerous life, when she began to taste the reality of those emotions she had inspired in the dreamy and enthusiastic young artist,—he came. Her heart smote her for her involuntary infidelity—an infidelity that could, she knew and felt, lead to no consummation; and when she stood over the kneeling boy, pouring his wealth of passion and devotion at her feet, all her better nature came back, and she murmured to herself, while she passed her slight fingers over her temples, as if to disenchant herself,

“What a heart am I exchanging for a dream!”

Yet still, she delayed—she could not yet give up the dream. Are there not days and periods in the existence of all high natures, when the whole of life seems but a dream, and when the heart clings fondly to the brightest?

But at last—when her poor Arthur was about to leave her in despair, her heart relented—a divine pity took possession of her soul—she forgot all but him, and

his pure and immeasurable love. At that moment, but for the untimely interruption of Mrs. Attarby, the fate of those two hearts had been sealed. But now! ——

At first she thought of writing, and calling him back to her. But this idea she soon abandoned. If he really loved her, as he said,—if he could not *live* without her,—he would come back—he would be sure to come back! But she was mistaken. He really and truly *did* love her, as he said—and it was true that he could not live without her:—but he, too, was proud. He could die! He came no more.

The interview with Wilmar, however, had thoroughly startled and alarmed her, by showing the nature, or at least the strong tendency, of her own feelings towards Captain Wallingford—feelings in which it would be madness to indulge, and which she determined, at any sacrifice, to check and uproot, before it was too late. After long and painful thought, she decided how best and most effectually this was to be done. Then she went up to Mrs. Attarby's study, where the two women sat and talked earnestly for a long time. Then Mrs. Attarby wrote a letter to Mrs. Wallingford, and sent it to the post; after which she went down to the drawing-room, and Madame de Saintlieu, saying she had a head-ache, went to her own room, and kissing her sleeping children, sat down in her little low chair, and leaning her head on the foot of the baby's crib, wept for a long, long time. She recalled all the tenderness and affection she had felt for Arthur—all his pure and

unselfish devotion, in those long, dark, hopeless days that followed her discovery of Rosalie—and of the real love that she had felt springing up for him in the fresh soil of her heart, new ploughed by the rude hand of sorrow and affliction. She turned away resolutely from the bright, brief vision that had lately come to haunt her dreams—she saw only her poor artist lover, with his pale face, his deep spiritual eyes, his heart overflowing with love and devotion. Then she lifted up her face, and wiped away her tears. She was calm and beautiful as an angel. The battle was over, the victory won.

Oh, such beings are the Christs of daily life—every epoch in their existence has its Gethsemane, and its crown of thorns—every day, in tears of blood, they expiate the sufferings and the weakness of others, in the holy crucifixion of self-sacrifice. Oh man! Absorbed in the fierce pursuit of phantoms that mock and madden, how little heedest thou those rare and infrequent spirits sent from heaven to bless and save thee!

CHAPTER XXIX.

TWO OF THE "FIRST FAMILIES."

FROM the court-room, Mr. Henderson, the exemplary husband and father, of course hastened to his home, to greet his affectionate wife and daughter, who were awaiting, with wonderful calmness, the result of the trial.

You think so? Then do we regret that we have failed in imparting a faithful idea of the absolute selfishness and worldliness—even to the overcoming of the family tie, the only natural passion which civilization acknowledges—that characterizes the members of our first families.

What was it that Ira Henderson loved best in all the world? His wife and children? Bah! His money bags.

And so, convulsed with impatience and apprehension at what might have happened during his absence, and groaning over the fearful hole in his assets, which must have been left by the restitution to the Wilmars, he rushed towards Third street. When his life was in danger, and he thought he saw the gallows at his

elbow, the restoration of this sum had seemed but a paltry amount, compared with what it purchased—life. Now, that he was free, he began to think that he had been juggled—that he could have got off for much less—for half—for a quarter. What a fool he had been! He actually felt as if he had been cheated, and began to cast about in his mind for some means of redress.

But it was too late—nor, indeed, would any subterfuge have availed him. Dr. Felton, though generally so easy and careless, lacked neither for spirit nor shrewdness, when the occasion demanded their exercise. His suspicions once aroused, and subsequently confirmed by Henderson's confession, he was by no means the man to be put off or deceived. Nothing less than immediate and full restitution would have saved the quaker's neck. Had he accepted anything less, he would have felt himself an accessory to the original fraud! We have seen how utterly unmanageable the astute Mr. SpeARBILL had been found by him—HENDERSON would have fared no better.

Trying to reconcile himself, then, to his immense loss, as he could not help considering it, he hastened to the store, where he found everything as usual—the salesmen all at their places, the cashier at his desk; while the head book-keeper advanced obsequiously to meet him, precisely as if nothing had happened, and his principal was returning from his usual twelve o'clock lunch. So far, well. But that was nothing—now for the banking-house, which was his *real*

wealth. What of that? His heart beat, in spite of his iron self-control: he felt weak, and determined to go into his private office for a few minutes, to recover himself. The head book-keeper followed him in, carefully closing the door after him.

Henderson sat down in his revolving chair, which evidently had not been moved or used since he had last occupied it, for the dust had gathered on the smooth-worn leathern seat, and on the table by which it stood. He got up and walked to the window—he opened it—shut it again—and returned nervously to his seat. The book-keeper stood near the door, as if waiting to be spoken to. At last, he mustered up courage.

“Joseph Brock,” said he, “has thee any thing particular to tell me? Is there any news among the world’s people?”

“Not much,” replied Brock, who had acquired the habit of quaker brevity and directness in his speech. “The house of Fisher, Brothers and Son, failed yesterday, and closed their doors.”

“Great Heaven!” screamed the quaker, leaping up as if a bullet had passed through his heart, and forgetting at once his piety and his personal pronouns; “you lie! You dare not tell me so!”

The book-keeper was even more astounded than frightened. He opened his eyes wide with wonder, and replied,

“Why, sir, it is in the papers, this morning,—and the banking-house is closed.”

Henderson staid to hear no more—but rushed through the store, almost foaming at the mouth, towards the banking-house. Those who saw him, shrugged their shoulders, and thought that perhaps he was about to be arrested again, and was fleeing from the officer.

It was true, the banking-house was shut! He tried the little private door, where he was in the habit of entering. All silent—all fast!

A mist passed before his eyes. He staggered, and would have fallen, but for the wall, against which he leaned. Then, after a few moments, he went to the corner and got a newspaper. Eagerly turning to the money article, he read the following paragraph:

“It is with sincere regret that we announce the stoppage, which took place yesterday, of the extensive banking-house of Messrs. Fisher, Brothers and Son, of this city. The extensive ramifications of this house with its branches, in New York, New Orleans, California, and Europe, have involved it in the recent commercial disasters in California, as we are informed, to the amount of several millions. It is reported—but upon what authority we are unable to say—that Mr. Henderson, of the firm of Ira Henderson and Son, has been for several years the principal capitalist of the house of Fisher, Brothers and Son, and that the principal portion of his immense fortune was invested in it, and that it was under his immediate though secret direction, that its gigantic operations

have been conducted. It is said, in well-informed financial circles, that the amount of the failure will not fall much short of ten millions. It may well be imagined that the unexpected failure of this house has produced the most intense excitement. We have seen nothing like it since the failure of the United States Bank. We understand that Mr. Fisher, the active head of the house, left the city yesterday, on his way to California."

This brief, dry, but pregnant paragraph told every thing—Henderson saw it all at a glance. Fisher, his tool, his instrument, his man of straw, had taken advantage of his imprisonment to gather together the assets of the concern, as far as possible, and abscond. Doubtless he had been able to realize and carry away some two or three million—leaving a larger amount of debts and liabilities behind, for which Henderson's personal property was responsible, as far as it would go. Here, then, was ruin—utter, complete, irretrievable! The great merchant, the millionaire, the financier who had held the fate of the whole mercantile community in his hands—who had raised and depressed prices, regulated the rates of interest, and pronounced upon the credit of others, with a word—whose will was law, and with whom even the banks themselves grew servile—was a bankrupt—a beggar! He had but one thought: why had he lived? and he repeated to himself the true old Shylock sentiment,

if not the words, (Jew or quaker, gaberdine or straight coat, it is all the same!)——

“You take my house, when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life,
When you do take the means whereby I live!”

If, at this moment, he could recall every thing that had passed since that fatal night,—if he could again place himself in prison, with the destiny of the Wilmars, (whom he now hated with an intense hatred,) and his life, in his own hands,—he would gladly do it. Not a thought should falter, not a muscle quiver—all should go to destruction together! He would die, mocking and triumphing over all!

But now, he was literally a beggar—an outcast.—He well knew that he was involved in the bankruptcy of the great house—which he had spent so many years of sleepless days and nights in creating and firmly establishing—for more than twenty times his own private fortune, and the whole value of his legitimate business.—The home and its appointments all belonged to his wife, and the store, with its entire resources, would inevitably be seized. He had just escaped from a trial for murder, in which his character had been portrayed in a light so odious that nothing but wealth could gloss, and which, that once gone, would sink him lower than the vagrants of the street. No one would give him employment, even to earn a meal—he must either steal or starve!

There was one escape—only one—and that he felt

he had the nerve and courage to avail himself of. He pondered for a long time for the best means of effecting his purpose—at length, with a smile of grim mockery, he muttered to himself,

“Yes, the rope is the best—that’s what I should have got, if they had condemned me. How the judges and jury will be taken in, when they find that, with all their trouble and pains, they couldn’t save me from hanging! Old Speardill, too—I’ll do him nicely—I’ll cheat him out of his fee!” Thus talking insanely to himself—all suicides are insane—he went towards his home—where, stealing softly up stairs, and past his daughter’s chamber, he entered his own room, locked the door, and—the coroner’s inquest, the next day, told the rest. He had hung himself at the head of his bed—over that pillow upon which all his wild and desperate schemes of fraud and power had been contrived. At last, that busy and unsleeping brain was still!

Dr. Felton’s chaise was stopped for a moment, by the coroner’s jury, and the gathering about the door of Henderson’s house, as he was on his way to Dr. Valentine’s, where he had been summoned in great haste—the old valetudinarian having been attacked with great violence by a fit of gout in the stomach, which threatened to carry him off.

Shocked by the fate of Henderson, and mingling in his reflections upon it, his recollections as to the symptoms and remedies of gout in the stomach, the good doctor reached the house of Mrs. Valentine, and was shown immediately to his patient’s room.

The paroxysm had passed over, and the old man lay panting and exhausted. It was evident at a glance, that his thoroughly worn and shattered system could not survive another attack.

“Doctor,” said he, in a faint voice, “I am glad you have come. Lock the door, and sit down close by me; I have an important secret to trust you with—let no one else come near me. How long do you think it may be before the spasm return? There will be but one more, I am well aware.”

Dr. Felton examined his patient carefully. “Tell me the truth,” said he—“it is all important.”

“It will not return before this evening—possibly not until to-morrow. Have you taken morphia?”

“Yes—too much! I have been living on it for the last two years. I have just swallowed eighteen grains.”

Dr. Felton started. “Eighteen grains of morphia!” he exclaimed; “why, it will kill you of itself!”

“Oh, that is nothing,” said the other; “it is scarcely my regular daily dose. But to business. You know a French lady named Madame de Saint-lieu? She is the daughter of the Count de Morny, and the poor girl that died in Cherry street—I have read all about it in the papers—was her niece. Rosalie was my daughter! I seduced her mother, while I was a student in the faubourg St. Germain. I eloped with her to London, where I abandoned her, and never heard of her again. It seems that the

poor girl followed me here, bringing our child with her. Doubtless she died in despair and want—for she would never have deserted her child.—I have had Spearbill with me, and have made my will. I have left every thing to Madame de Saintlieu, in case her sister is not alive. I wish I had told Rosalie my real name—she might then have found me, and I could, in some measure have atoned for my crime. But everything is now too late. Here is the will—take it now, for fear of accidents, and as soon as I am dead, see it executed. I do no wrong to any one. My wife's fortune is ample for herself—I have no other claims upon me.—And now I come to the serious part of the affair. I wish, before I die, to see the sister of Rosalie—to beg her forgiveness—to gaze upon Rosalie's picture: I can then die in hope of being forgiven—for I have deeply and truly repented. Will you undertake this?"

Dr. Felton took the paper, and prepared to go. "But," said he, "what if Mrs. Valentine tries to prevent this meeting?"

"She knows nothing of these circumstances—she must not know. Thomas will watch for you at the door. You will not be disturbed. Hurry, good doctor—I shall not last long. Tell her to come at once—and bring the picture. She must not refuse."

The doctor waited no longer. He descended the stairs, and found Thomas waiting in the hall.

"Mrs. Valentine has gone out, sir," he said; "I will wait for you here—my master has given me directions."

Felice was deeply affected by the news that Dr. Valentine was the seducer of her sister, and could scarcely command herself sufficiently to listen to the request he had sent, to see her before he died. At first, she would have refused; but death expiates all offences, and her better nature prevailed.

They found the old man sinking fast. He gazed eagerly at Madame de Saintlieu, and held out his hand for the picture. Then he fixed his eyes upon the dumb features of Rosalie, with a long and earnest regard, while tears rolled over his wan cheeks. Then he pressed the miniature to his lips, and laid it on his heart. Then he signed for Felice to come near—took her hand, and looked up imploringly into her eyes—and so died.

Madame de Saintlieu softly laid down the hand that had held hers, took the picture away from the still heart—and gazing sadly and reverently for a moment on the face of the dead, slowly went out.

They found Thomas at the door—the faithful and only watcher at the rich man's chamber.

“Is it all over, sir?” he asked, in a whisper.

“Yes, Thomas, all is over,” the doctor replied. “Go in and watch by the dead.”

The poor fellow wiped his eyes with his hand; and then, with a respectful gesture to the doctor and his companion, he softly opened the door and went in—as if he had feared to disturb his sleeping master!

Do not fear, faithful and careful servant! He will wake no more!

CHAPTER XXX.

FELICE'S LETTER.

FELICE, when she returned home, was glad to find Captain Wallingford waiting for her. The solemn scene she had just witnessed, had strengthened her heart for the explanation which she felt must come, with this man, who had already, and almost unconsciously to herself, acquired too great an influence over her. The doctor left her at the door, and she entered the drawing-room, in a sad and serious mood, and with hesitating steps.

"I hope you will forgive me for waiting for you," said Wallingford; "I know I had scarcely the right to take so great a liberty—but I wished much to see you to-day, as I go away to-morrow."

"Go away!" said Felice, taken by surprise, and starting. "I thought you—that is"—

"If I dared but hope that you would rather I should not go, I would gladly stay all my life beside you, come what might. But you turn away—you are offended at my freedom! But forgive me, Felice—that is, Madam—I have been so happy! You seem some

angel that has crossed my way. You cannot be angry with me!"

"Oh no, indeed I am not angry. But I must not understand what you would seem to say. I have no right to listen even to gallantries from you."

"I protest, madam, it is no gallantry! If I were free from the entanglements of youthful folly—and I *will* be free of them—I would force you to hear me say that I love you, Felice, and that I lay my life at your feet. But I will be free of all, when my love shall not insult you. Then—then—oh, if I might but hope!"

"Forbear, forbear!" exclaimed Felice, passionately; then, recovering her composure, she added, in a firmer tone; "I can never listen to you on such a subject—never—never!"

"Felice!"

"Do not—do not! let this end forever here. Look at me—convince yourself that I am entirely in earnest; and if you would retain my friendship, never speak to me in this way again."

"Cruel! But what if I were legally and honourably free—would your reply be still the same?"

"That you must never be—but if it were so—yes!"

"Then may the world go hang! I swear by the stars that have so often piloted me over the seas, that I never have loved any human being but you—you are the only woman worthy the name, that I have ever met. And you—you care for me no more than for a feather on the tide! I was a vain, ridiculous fool to

dream that it could be otherwise! But forgive me, if you can—and at least let me go with your good wishes—and so,” he continued in a tone of deep and sad feeling; “and so farewell, the only bright hours of my existence—the only spirit in all the world that could have won all my heart’s worship, and made me worthy of herself! I’ll back to the sea, the only friend that does not cast me off!”

“But Captain Wallingford,” said Felice, still struggling violently, lest some unschooled vibration of her voice should betray the secret imprisoned and dying in her heart; “let us at least be friends. My friendship you have, most freely and frankly.”

“No, no—I will not accept friendship from you! I know you mean precisely what you have said; that you do not and never will, love me, even were all obstacles removed. Your friendship would be too dangerous—I dare not trust myself—I should not keep to the contract a day—no, not an hour! Felice!” said he, suddenly, changing his tone, and coming nearer; “you are free—*why* can you not love me?” and he would have taken her hand.

But she drew back, put her hand to her side, as if in suffering, and replying faintly, “No more—no more! I will tell you all to-morrow”—she disappeared.

Angry, mortified, and thoroughly bewildered, Wallingford stood a moment irresolute, and then, recovering himself as well as he could, went away.

The next day, when he inquired for Madame de

Saintlieu, the servant said she was out, but had left a letter for him. The Captain seized the letter, hastened to his lodgings, tore open the envelope, and read—

“Though we shall never meet again, and though I have sacrificed the brightest dream of my life—your love—yet I cannot sacrifice your esteem, your respect. I cannot bear that you should think me the vain, trifling coquette that my conduct, unexplained, justifies you in believing me. Yes—I could have loved you, with my whole soul—my heart sprang to meet you, my being trembled with the longing desire to repose upon you, to feel that I had a right to your protection, your love. But this was too happy a destiny. There is one—a tender, gentle, gifted being, who loves me with a life passion—who would die if I should abandon him. I dare not—for I, too, love him! yes, I love him—can you understand that?—Not as I might have loved you, but with a deep tenderness, an affection that leads me to make, unknown to him, and to all but you and heaven, this last, supreme sacrifice. His life is in my keeping. If I should give him up, he would die—but you will not—not because you love me less, but because your nature is stronger, and because you, like me, are capable of sacrificing yourself for others. Let this be the pure, the holy bond between our souls! I do not ask you to forget me, I would still be a pleasant memory to you—and my heart needs the strength which it derives from believing that you understand and sympathize with what

I have done. I could not deprive myself of this consolation.

“And now for yourself. There is one, pure, innocent, overwhelmed beneath the vilest calumnies, who loves you, even as *he* loves me. I *know* that she is innocent—that she loves you—that she is worthy of you. I conjure you, by the love you would have given to me, to take her to your heart, and learn, like me, the sublime happiness of sacrifice! So, in our noble deeds, shall we be united, with a union that time nor death can sever—a godlike sympathy shall ever keep our souls at the same height, soaring and sustaining the tender beings who draw their life from our strength. Let us, my beloved, whom I shall never see on earth again, cheerfully embrace this mutual hope, this mutual destiny. Let us be like those silent messengers from land to land, who meet at starry midnight on the deep; and, after lying for a pleasant moment, in the shadow of each other’s wings, with words of hope and comfort, sail on upon their silent way.—Farewell!

“FELICE.”

Wallingford kissed the letter reverently, and put it in his bosom—then he wiped a tear from his eye, sighed profoundly, and fell into a long and gloomy revery.

When he raised his head, it was night. After getting lights, he wrote a letter, went down stairs and posted it at the bar, giving orders to be called for the night train for Baltimore.

In a week afterwards, Madame de Saintlieu read in

a morning paper, a little paragraph, announcing that Captain Wallingford, of the United States frigate —, had sailed to join the fleet in the Mediterranean, being accompanied by his wife.

She handed the paper to Mrs. Attarby, and pointed, with a quiet smile of satisfaction, at the paragraph she had just been reading.

“Well and nobly done!” said Mrs. Attarby; “embrace me, my sister!” and rising, she clasped Felice to her bosom, and kissed her.

At this moment, the servant entered the breakfast room, where they were sitting, and said that Mr. Wilmar had sent to know whether Madame de Saintlieu would see him for a single moment.

Felice dried the tears in her eyes, and replied that she would come down immediately.

“Pooh!—Hang his ‘single moments!’” said Mrs. Attarby, affecting to be in a great rage; “don’t I know what that means! I declare, that boy is insufferable!—I am growing furiously jealous of him!”

CHAPTER XXXI.

AN INFALLIBLE CURE FOR SEA-SICKNESS.

ARACHNE'S web is almost woven—there remains but a loop to take up, here and there, and the pattern, such as it is, will be completed. And first, we must go back to Wilmar.

From the last interview with Madame de Saintlieu, which we have described, Arthur saw her no more. He felt conscious that he had been deceiving himself, and perhaps a slight degree of injustice led him to believe that she had assisted in that deception. It was true, she had never said she loved him—but then the intimacy which she allowed—even her very manner and language, while urging him to wait—were too explicit to proceed from any thing but love. Yet now, all was changed again! This dreadful stranger, with his laughing face and merry voice, his easy manner, his perfect self-possession—what would not the poor, timid, trembling artist give, to be like him! Alas! He had nothing to give—he had already given all, and found his gift rejected.

What is usually understood in the world by *jealousy*—the supposititious passion which brawny Othellos

“tear a cat in” on the stage—or the watchful jealousy of hysterical and faded wives, of every woman their husbands may chance to speak to—and *vice versa*—is either a coarse, brutal inferiority of nature, which sees itself excelled by every passable member of its sex, or else a bald, unmitigated, abstract selfishness—the selfishness that produces nothing and gains nothing—of the man who hates to lend his neighbour a light, or who walls up his neighbour’s chamber window, merely because he may do so by his lease.

But there is a jealousy, springing from an absorbing, life-pervading, passion, which, nursed and cherished by deceptive hopes and smiles, finds itself suddenly uprooted, and prostrate. To natures full of tenderness and devotion, and unknowing to struggle or contend for their own rights, such a passion and such a jealousy, may often bring death. It was so with Arthur. Wholly and absorbingly as he loved Felice, and necessary to his very existence as it was that his love should be returned, yet he never dreamed of a contest for it. I know not how to explain this peculiarity of a rare class of minds—but I know that it exists. To them there seems something ignoble and degrading to enter into a struggle, a scuffle, a skirmish, to which they cannot stoop, even to attain life’s supreme good. They will rather die with thirst, apart, than rush with the herd to the stream.

Arthur Wilmar was of this unfortunate, though precious organization. His offering once laid, humbly and bashfully, on the shrine, he would have foregone

heaven itself rather than hold it up to catch the wavering eye of the goddess.—The possibility of rivalry, not existing in his own heart, he could not understand it, nor await its results, in another. He did not *choose* to love Felice, by having compared her with others, and finally given her the preference. He loved her because he could not help it: she was the completion of himself—the fulfilment of his destiny. When she was lost to him, life and the world were over—he had no longer lot or interest in them.

And therefore it was, that he began speedily to droop and fade, even like his sister, whose steps already faltered on the borders of the grave, and who waited patiently for the hour that was to give rest and peace to her weary spirit. Dr. Felton, who saw his beloved children, as he regarded them, thus sinking away from the life of joy and happiness which had been so unexpectedly and so wonderfully restored to them, was in despair. With the infatuated skepticism of his logical profession, he insisted that the evil must be susceptible of some tangible and scientific remedy—at least in Arthur's case—and finally persuaded himself that he had hit upon it. Change of climate!—change of scene!—that was the wonderful panacea!—that would speedily bring back health and strength! And so it was decided that Arthur—who was gentle and docile as an infant—should travel. After mature deliberation, the good doctor fixed upon Italy—Palermo—as the favoured spot whose balmy breezes were to bring back the colour to the pale cheek, and the brightness

to the heavy and lustreless eyes. The arrangements were rapidly completed; a suitable companion had been engaged—and Arthur was to go by the next steamer. The night before his last day in his native land, he went for the last time to his writing-table, heaped with long-neglected and unfinished scores, and snatches of melodies which he had been used to writing hastily down as they rose in his brain. He sat for a long time, leaning his head on his hand, now taking up his pen, now laying it aside. At length, he seemed to have decided; and he wrote to Felice this simple adieu:—

“Felice—They who love me, send me to die in Italy—although they think I am there to find health and strength again. Alas! health and strength are no more for me—I leave them with you, together with my love, that is as undying as my immortal soul, and will be with you ever, after I am dead, and when it can no longer offend you. Still I have a certain satisfaction in the idea of going to Italy. *You* have been there; and I think it will be pleasant to pass away, amid the scenes hallowed by your presence, when you knew me not, and had not been vexed by my foolish passion.

“I have tried hard to outlive my love and my disappointment—for I know how it afflicts you to give pain to others, and how dear I am to my sisters. But I could not, dear Felice. My life was nothing till I loved you—without you, it returns to nothing again.

“Do not be unhappy on my account. You have done nothing but good to me. Could I have lived without the one supreme blessing, your influence would have been enough to fill an ordinary life with happiness. To you I owe all that I really know of art—which once I loved so well! And your kindness has given me many happy, oh, fatally happy, hours! Farewell—forever! I have tried to believe that I had still strength and courage to see you once more: but at the last moment, I dare not venture. May God make you happy!

“ARTHUR.”

The letter is gone. The final preparations for the voyage are completed. The sisters are sobbing around him—Dr. Felton is there—the companion has arrived.—They are to go to New York by the five o'clock train, so that the invalid may sleep quietly over night, and be fresh for the voyage. All is done. The carriage is at the door. In another half-hour it will be time to go.

What is that? Another carriage drives rapidly up and stops. Who is it? They have no acquaintances. What can it be? Arthur, who is half lying on a sofa, has not heard it. He is meditating—or dreaming. Suddenly he starts to his feet as he was wont to do, in the good old days. He leans forward to listen. He has heard a footstep—a voice—that has made his heart leap in his bosom, with the old measure. The door opens.

"Where is he? Am I in time? Arthur—dear, dear Arthur! Take me to your heart—I am yours forever!"

Ah, doctor! you need not send your patient to Italy—Italy has come to him!

"Proud, obstinate, naughty boy!" she murmurs, as he clasps her unchidden to his breast; "to make me throw off my womanhood altogether, and come and beg him, thus in public, to take me! What shall we do with the convict, doctor? Does he not deserve some dreadful punishment at my hand?"

"Marry him!" said the joyous doctor, cutting a caper, and flinging a box of pills, he had been manipulating as preventives against sea sickness, out of the window. "If that doesn't reform him, he is incorrigible."

The two sisters were wild: they snatched Felice from Arthur's arms—they embraced her—they showered upon her every endearing epithet. She had saved their brother—he should not go away—they would all be so happy!

"And now, my sisters—am I accepted? and has the lonely wanderer found a home and kindred at last?—Where is that *other* sister, whom I dared not come to see for this long, long time, all because of that tyrannical, despotic Bluebeard of a spoilt child there!"

"Nay, there, and there!" cried Arthur; "I'll find a way to stop her mouth—never fear, girls!"—and so they all scampered up stairs, leaving the doctor and

the travelling companion alone in the little front parlour.

"My friend," said the doctor, gravely, to the very grave and respectable looking travelling companion; "we seem to be in the superfluous vocative case here, just at present! But I will undertake to promise that Mr. Wilmar shall pay you a year's salary, according to agreement, whether he goes abroad or not. For my own part, I shall charge him a full fee, whether he is carried off by consumption or matrimony."

And so it happened that the "intolerable Mr. Wilmar," was always calling at Mrs. Attarby's, at all sorts of unseasonable hours, and asking to see her friend Felice, "only for a single moment," which moment was often expanded to hours—much to the dissatisfaction of the jovial actress, who declared that she hoped they would hasten the marriage as fast as possible, if it were only that she might have Felice all to herself!

The sisters, and especially Helen, united in the wish expressed by Mrs. Attarby, who now was a frequent visitor at the Wilmars, that the marriage should take place as soon as possible; and there being no serious cause for postponement, the event was fixed for an early day—which was announced by Dr. Felton, to whom the matter had been referred, and with whom Arthur had recently held several long and mysterious consultations.

A few days after the last of these "ominous interviews," as Mrs. Attarby called them, Arthur called at

her house, soon after breakfast, and said he had come to fetch Felice to pay a visit with him—that is, if Mrs. Attarby would consent to entrust her to his protection until dinner, to which he had the honour of inviting himself.

“Well, I suppose you must go, my dear,” she replied, making up a mouth; “but there is one satisfaction—his tyranny will soon be over. When you are once fairly married, you will have the right of doing just as you please!”

They rode through the pleasant streets, almost in silence. Each heart was full of its own sensations, and each felt that its happy dreams were all shared by the other. Arthur gazed upon his fair and lovely bride, and had no need of words.

At last, they stopped before a large and splendid mansion, surrounded by a garden, luxuriant with flower-beds, fruit-trees, and climbing vines, which shielded the house from the noisy street, and shed a fragrant silence within their sacred precincts. They alighted, and Arthur led the wondering Felice up the broad steps, and into the magnificent drawing-room, where were assembled his sister Kate and Emma, with Dr. Felton. She stopped and looked around in surprise—then turned to Arthur, asking an explanation with her eyes.

“Welcome, my own Felice!” said he, taking her hand, and leading her to his sisters; “welcome to your home! This is my father’s house!”

And the days flew rapidly by—yet the unreasona-

ble Arthur grew impatient, and found each day longer than the one before; and Mrs. Attarby, to console him, sent him an almanac!

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court of good society held a special term, at which the case of "Our First Families" *versus* Madame la Contesse Felice de Saint-lieu, convicted of being a French adventurer, and no better than she should be, was re-opened and re-argued at length—Mrs. Glacée and Mrs. Valentine appearing for the defendant, and the bench rendering a unanimous opinion adverse to the former judgment—on the ground that the defendant being now virtually a member of one of "Our First Families," her position in the case was entirely changed, and no action, consequently, would lie.

Miss Jemima Jenkins, having been duly appointed crier of this august tribunal, of course the news of the favourable verdict spread far and wide, with a celerity which would have put the fire alarm telegraph completely in the shade. In consequence, the noble mansion of the Wilmars was beset, during fashionable hours, with brilliant equipages, and a shower of paste-board congratulations poured upon the devoted heads of the family. Mrs. Attarby, too, though sorely against her will, shared in the fruitful blessings of this change—as Felice had resolutely refused to accept or return a single civility or attention, to which her friend was not a party.

At length, the day arrived. Mrs. Loftus, who had faithfully defended and sustained her in her adversity,

now rejoiced, with almost a mother's joy, over her happiness and prosperity.

The wedding was a most brilliant affair—the world appearing as if it knew not how to do any thing but smile, and striving to hide its falsehood and hollow meanness, by a lavish display of the semblance of all those high and sacred offices of mutual good-will, which society ought to render to its members, in truth and sincerity. The day passed by in a dazzling gleam of brightness; and poor Felice, bewildered at this sudden restoration to all she had lost, now made sweet and sacred by the baptism of mutual love, felt her heart ache with its burden of happiness.

At last, all were gone—the pageant was over—they were alone. Wilmar, springing to the side of his wife, was about to clasp her in his arms, when she took his hand, and gently led him to a seat.

“Arthur, dear husband!” said she; “thus far, you have overwhelmed me with a quick succession of happy surprises—it is now my turn, if Doctor Felton has not betrayed me. Let me, then, hasten to acquit myself of a suspicion that you might hereafter hear, in this painted and false world that has just left us. I am not the poor and helpless adventurer which I was, until a little while ago. There, Arthur—there is my present. Dr. Felton tells me that I am very rich—it is the will of Dr. Valentine, the destroyer of my sister and her child. But he truly repented—and on his death-bed, he called me to him, and made me the inheritor of all his wealth. Had it not been for

this, dear Arthur, the poor Felice would never have wooed—for you *did* make me woo you, Arthur!—you can't deny it!—the rich and aristocratic Mr. Wilmar, though she would have borne to her grave a grateful remembrance of the love of the poor artist."

"Angel!" he exclaimed; "but I accept this, only on one condition."

"What is that?"

"That I hold it in trust for the children of my Felice," said he. "Nay, it must be so—my fortune," he added, kissing her, "will be enough, dearest, for ours!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ARISTOCRACY.

THE events of the trial, the death of Doctor Valentine and Mr. Henderson, had overwhelmed at least one of the families with consternation and grief, and sent the whole fashionable world into mourning. For let us do "our first families" justice. Though continually engaged in the bitterest and most absurd rivalries among themselves, they have great *esprit de corps*, and an injury or a misfortune from without inflicted upon one, seriously affects all. In this respect, at least, this class are superior to those below them; and whether it proceeds from pride, policy, or actual sympathy, we willingly yield it our respect. Besides, the falsehood and hard-heartedness of fashionable life, especially amongst the women, is very often but the effect of custom and narrow association, or perhaps affected altogether, for the purpose of preserving that appearance of indifference which with barbarians and good society is alike deemed the necessary stamp of rank and position. Even Mrs. Valentine herself was not an intrinsically worthless woman, though reckless and unprincipled in her plea-

tures—she was only gross, vulgar, and selfish by nature, and had been made tyrannical and licentious by the possession of great wealth which she did not know how to use properly, and the ambition of gaining through its means a social rank to which she was, personally, in no way entitled. She was the type of a large and increasing class in American society—vain and ambitious of distinction, restless under the insolent equality insisted upon by our vulgar and ill-bred democracy, and yet possessing no qualifications except wealth, calculated to elevate them above its loud-talking, huge-pawed, tobacco-chewing level.

No intelligent and right-thinking man or woman—and especially no sensitive, imaginative woman—can be an advocate of *social* democracy. In the political arena, they may do what they please. The whole problem of politics, laws, government, and political institutions, is merely in a transitional state, and its senseless turmoils and ludicrous injustices are gradually leading to a state of things of which demagogues and politicians have no idea. But private society is a sacred enclosure, whose bulwarks and lines of demarkation cannot be safely broken down. Refinement, taste, learning, genius, and those elevated sentiments and grateful courtesies of life which spring from good breeding, must ever take rank above the ignorance, brutality, and impudent vulgarity, which our imperfect civilization imposes upon the mass of mankind. Besides, every individual, every family, in its personal and social relations, has an inalienable right to

be as exclusive and as "aristocratic," (since that is the word,) as it pleases. To break down the *social* barriers which separate the different ranks of society, is to abolish refinement, and obliterate all incitements to individual chivalry and nobility.

But the great mistake of our American aristocracy, and that which so justly consigns it to the ridicule of the whole nation, is, that it seeks the justification for its pretensions to superiority entirely in its wealth. Money is the one, universal, *only* distinction. Artists, philosophers, authors, and men of genius, if occasionally admitted into our "good society," are made keenly to feel their inferiority, and treated with the contemptuous indifference due only to menials; so that no man of talent or genius, who respects himself, remains among them, and they are reduced to the dreary alternative of their own dulness and stupidity, enlivened and embittered by rival waste and extravagance, and by that vulgarity of exclusiveness,—scandal.

Now of all the many things that have been, or may be, made use of as the test of social distinction, wealth is the very last which should have been adopted in this country, where the law of primogeniture does not exist, where property is seldom made hereditary by will, and still more seldom retained in the same family after the second generation; where the son of the tailor of one generation, becomes the nabob of the brokers' board in the next, and the poor girl who earned a miserable subsistence in a garret until she was twenty, becomes the lady patroness of the Italian

opera, in after life, and wears the brilliant dresses and magnificent opera cloaks which she used but to stitch together. Nor are these illustrations taken at random; they are the epitome of well known personal histories. In an exclusive class of society, formed of such materials, it would be absurd to expect to find any of those elements, as a general thing, which can alone make the existence of social superiority respectable, or even tolerable, in a country politically free. Aristocracy is not a mere name—it is a fact. It has existed, and has been more or less respected, beloved, or despised, from the very commencement of civilization, according as its members have been endowed with those qualities which are its very essence and life—personal chivalry, courage, and honour; enlightened patronage of virtue, art, and literature; generosity, magnanimity, and lofty self-denial. And in those countries where aristocracy exists as a hereditary institution, its power and respectability have invariably decreased as these high qualities have become extinct. The gradual corruption and deterioration in the personal character of the members of the old French aristocracy, finally brought it to contempt and extinction, at the close of the last century; the same causes are at work, and will inevitably produce a similar result in England before the present has run out. But aristocracy, in fact, is a class superior to the mass of society—is a component part of civilization itself; it has existed since this phase of human development was inaugurated, and will only disappear when man-

kind passes into a new and totally different mode of being, until civilization itself, as barbarism and patriarchy have already done, has accomplished its destiny, and become extinguished, and the human family passes to—what? Ask the Fourierists, or the Spirit-rappers.

But our American aristocracy has the misfortune of having commenced its career at the insignificant and contemptible end—at the phase of death, instead of birth. Having broken away, politically, from all European models and experiences, we have been content to remain the servile copyists of Europe, in every thing else. Our aristocracy has begun, where the aristocracies of the old world are just about to leave off—petulant, narrow, selfish, mean and extravagant—destitute of real superiority of character or endowment, and relying solely upon money, and an emulation of material ostentation, whose only and inevitable end is bankruptcy, fraud, ruin, and the ridicule and contempt of the people.

Yet aristocracy is as proper to a republic, as to a monarchy, an empire, or a despotism.—Nay, an aristocracy of the right kind would perhaps play a more important and beneficent part in a republic, than in any other form of government. The great problem is, to unite the minds and hearts of superior virtue and superior genius, with the wealth which can alone give vitality and effect to their inspirations. As it is, things are notoriously and laughably the reverse of this. If you were called upon to make up a dele-

gation of the talent, learning, genius and virtue, of the country, you would no more dream of making your selections from the *soi disant* "aristocracy," than you would think of choosing a representation of our material greatness and wealth, from among the men of genius and intellectual or personal distinction. Never were the two elements of material and moral superiority so widely separated, as in this country.—Our aristocracy, as a general fact, have not even good taste, good breeding, or good manners. They dress badly—they speak badly—they eat, drink, and sleep, badly—the women, for the most part, have coarse features, flat feet, and vulgar hands. They wear gaudy dresses—they talk loudly, and giggle, and affect false modesty, in public—they are fond of slang, scandal, and low literature—they are rude and insolent to their inferiors, and mean and oppressive to their domestics. They always take pains to *assert themselves*, which a truly high-bred person never does, except by the unconscious quietness of his dress, appearance, language, and manner—and they exhaust their lives and fortunes in ridiculous attempts to out-dress, out-furnish, out-build, and out-shine, one another. In a word, that which passes itself off as the Aristocracy of this country, would be deemed only the Snobbery of another. Go to Washington in winter—to Saratoga in summer—or look in, at any time, at a fashionable hotel or an "exclusive" party—see the airs, the pretensions, the grimaces—listen to the subjects of conversation, and the tone of voice, the language, and

the manner in which they are treated—criticise the dresses, the license of talk among the young men and women, the loud laughing, the squirming, and perpetual giggling—study the manners, and measure the personal accomplishments, of the company—and you would think that Chawls Yellowplush and Measter Jeames had marshalled forth the hosts of high life below stairs, for a grand holiday. I declare that the last time I was at Saratoga, I saw the veritable “aristocracy” of New York and Philadelphia, at the U—— Hotel, dance the *can-can*, as “the latest fashionable dance from Paris,” with all its licentious and obscene movements and postures, as practised at the termination of a fête at the *Mabille* and *Chateau Rouge*! There was an Italian barber, who, being “driven from his country on account of his political opinions!” had turned Parisian dancing-master, and established himself at Saratoga, over a ten-pin alley, I believe—or a church. His “exclusive” customers had besought him for something new and startling—some dance that the common people did not know. After a good deal of reflection, he was inspired with that sublime audacity which ever accompanies genius—and taught them the *can-can*! The “exclusive” young ladies and their slim-legged “beaux” embraced it and each other with enthusiasm—the mammas stared and chuckled with delight. It was a decided hit—the *can-can* was all the rage—and the fortune of the lucky dancing-master was made!

And so,—having disposed of the subordinate characters in our story—who, we fear, have little besides devotion, truth, and genius, to recommend them—we will once more return to the sacred precincts of good society, and follow out the fortunes of our first families.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

GATHERING UP THE THREADS.

OUR "exclusive" readers will of course have done us the honour to have long ago discovered, that the real heroine of our story was the wealthy and aristocratic young heiress, Miss Sarah Henderson. It is true, that, in order to get through with the more common-place incidents of the narrative, and to dispose of the low artists, doctors, sea-captains, and home-loving Wilmar girls, our real heroine, and her shadow, that eccentric and terribly aristocratic quakeress, Miss Jemima Jenkins, have been kept too much in the back-ground. The field, however, is at last clear—Madame de Saint-lieu has gone off with her young husband, to attend the conservatoire in Paris, and the San Carlos at Naples. Captain Wallingford, reconciled to his spirituelle and coquettish little wife, who always in her heart dearly loved him, although her innate love of fun and mischief had led her into sundry awkward but innocent indiscretions, has taken her on board his beautiful ship of war, the Sea-Hawk, and gallantly sailed down the Chesapeake, out at Hampton roads,

and away over the Atlantic, to his station in the Mediterranean.

Mrs. Loftus, after taking leave of Felice, with as much affection as if she really had been her own daughter—hugging the two little girls to her heart, and giving the blushing and happy Wilmar a rigorous lecture on his duties as a husband and a *father*—sat herself down alone and disconsolate in her stately old house, and for several days gave herself up to solitude and melancholy.—Then, with a sigh and a rigid compression of her lips, she resolutely paid her few debts and visits, broke up her lonely establishment, and went to establish herself in a convent at Cincinnati, where the principal of which was a friend of her childhood, and with whom she had long intended to seek a peaceful asylum from a society she despised, and a world with which her earthly sympathies were now lost.

Poor Helen Wilmar, stricken to the heart through her affections, felt that the blow was mortal. Even could she have forgiven her lover for his black infidelity, and the unmitigated turpitude of his conduct, it was impossible that she could give her hand to the destroyer of a pure and confiding girl, the relative of a noble creature who was now her brother's wife, her own beloved and idolized sister. Besides, although she did truly and sincerely *forgive* Edward, and wish him all the happiness of which he had forever deprived her, her pure and sensitive soul could never have suffered the contact of such a nature as Edward had proved himself to possess. The Edward Ingraham she had so

fondly and fervently loved—for whose love she was about to die—existed no longer. He was a sacred memory concealed in her heart, which she would take with her to heaven, where in the infinity of perfected existences, every ideal finds its realization and embodiment—where some spirit, corresponding in all things to *her* Edward, already stood waiting to receive and bless her.

Still she bore up bravely—she would not damp the glowing happiness of her brother and his bride. Her cheerful smiles and gay congratulations—mingled sometimes even with flashes of her old playfulness and humour—deceived the watchful eyes of affection; and both Arthur and Felice, as they embraced her for the last time, whispered, with a newly-founded hope, that in a few months they should return and find her well and happy. Dr. Felton, who was very busy rubbing the glasses of his spectacles, which had somehow been unaccountably dim, all the morning, God-blessed them all, over and over again, and in reply to the entreaties of Wilmar that he should look paternally after his sisters, said,

“Don’t bother yourself, young man—attend to your own family affairs, if you please, and let other people’s alone. I intend to marry Kate, myself, long before you get back,—and as for little Helen here, we’ll have the colour all back in her cheeks again, won’t we child? There, there!—Have done with your kissing and be off, or you will be too late for the train. By the way, Arthur, you have forgotten the young man

who was to go with you to Europe as your 'companion,' you know?"

"Oh," said Arthur, turning to Felice, with a bright glow of happiness suffusing his face; "I have engaged a companion for the voyage ——"

"Of life!" murmured Felice, laying her head on her husband's shoulder, and taking the doctor's hand and kissing it. And so they went, and Helen and Kate, with the good doctor, who came every day to see them, were left alone.

The position of Mrs. Attarby had, as yet, undergone no material change. Although she had not the slightest intention or desire of retaining her married state, yet she was determined that the divorce should take place in her own way, or at all events, in such a manner as that it should not leave her reputation any more seriously compromised than that of her husband himself. She, therefore, immediately commenced a cross action against him, for divorce. The case was thus taken from the legislature and thrown into the courts, where it might remain suspended for years. Meanwhile, Mrs. Attarby, in no way disconcerted, but as haughty and independent as ever, went on in her usual way of life; and after taking a cordial leave of Felice, for whom she had conceived a profound attachment, promised to meet her, in a few months, in Europe.

At the house of Mrs. Valentine, neither the events of the trial, nor the death of the doctor, had made any perceptible change, except the temporary suspension of the lady's regular "Wednesdays," and the adoption

of the prescribed mourning, with all the established details, in Mrs. Valentine's dress, note-paper, sealing-wax, &c.

Edward continued to occupy his old apartment in the house of his aunt. But his habits had undergone a great change, since the trial of himself and Ira Henderson for the murder of poor Rosalie. He was seldom seen in the street; and, whether from shame or repentance, he carefully avoided all those public haunts of dissipation, where he had been in the habit of meeting his dissolute companions. His appearance, too, was greatly changed. His face was thinner, and his cheeks almost haggard. He walked slowly, with his head bowed down, apparently absorbed in serious thought. The demijohn had been banished from his chamber; and his aunt, who one morning paid him a visit unannounced, found him busily reading.

"Why, cousin," said she, "reading! What can be the matter with you? I don't remember ever to have found you at that before. What has come over you?"

"So much the worse, aunt," said Ingraham, gravely, looking up with something like impatience, and slightly emphasizing the "aunt," as if to remind her of the real nature of their relationship. "But I beg pardon—pray be seated. If I had known of your visit, I should not have been found in my dressing-gown."

"Good gracious, how ceremonious we are! Why, Edward, one would suppose that we were acquaintances of a week's standing! Do you think that recent events

have made any change in my feelings? If you do, you are mistaken."

"But they have in mine, aunt. I have had a terrible lesson; and in the silence and solitude of my cell, I was compelled, whether I would or no, to sternly review my past life. I have not only been very wicked, but a very great fool. Having every thing at my command to make myself and others happy, I have literally thrown away the best part of my life. I never had but one real, sincere sentiment, and that was my love for Helen Wilmar. If I had been permitted to marry her, I should have made her happy, and been myself of some use and consideration in the world—for I am not wholly destitute of good impulses and powers by nature. I only wanted guidance and encouragement."

"Why, cousin, I declare you preach like a parson!" exclaimed Mrs. Valentine, with a forced laugh.

"Don't interrupt me, *aunt*," replied Edward, with increased gravity. "You have sought this interview, and must now hear me—perhaps better now than at another time. I say, if I had married Helen, whom I loved, and whose heart I broke by casting her off, I should have been a different being. And it was entirely through you that I did give her up. What did I care about her loss of fortune? Had I not enough and abundance for both? But—the truth must be told, aunt, though I shudder with shame and remorse as I utter it: you broke off my marriage for your own purposes—you wanted to retain me for ——"

"Boy!" exclaimed Mrs. Valentine, rising up and speaking in a hoarse, fierce tone, her lips white with anger; "dare you remind me—dare you accuse me! Beware, or I will crush you into the earth!"

"My own actions have already laid me there," replied Ingraham, calmly and sorrowfully. "I do not accuse you, I only tell you the truth: nor do I fear you, for I have devoted the rest of my life to the attempt to retrieve myself, and save the little good that may yet be in me. I have already written a sincerely humble, but frank and honest, letter to Helen Wilmar, and begged that she would believe in my repentance, and permit me to hope, by a long probation, to become worthy of her affection."

"You have not really done that? You would not thus humiliate yourself? You would not marry that girl?" cried Mrs. Valentine, coming up to her nephew, seizing him violently by the arm, and gazing with fury at him.

"I have! I would!" replied he, smiling faintly at the pain of her gripe upon his arm; "joyfully would I devote my life to the happiness of that dear and exquisite woman."

"I'll kill her!" hissed his aunt, through her set teeth.

"It will not be necessary," said Ingraham, bitterly; "it is now several days since I wrote, and I have received no notice of my letter. No—how could I expect it? She justly scorns me, and treats me as an outlaw from society and mankind."

"Oh, she doesn't want you now!" said Mrs. Valentine, who, ashamed of her violence, had assumed a tone of irony; "she has got her fortune back, and can pick and choose."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, don't you know that the Wilmars were cheated out of their property by old Henderson, and that Dr. Felton made it as a condition, before he would let Helen come into court, that it should be all restored to them? Oh, ho! So you thought that innocent young lady came all the way to the trial, to save *your* life? Not a bit of it—it was for the money—the money—nothing less! And how came she in that house, I wonder! I don't believe any more of her fine story than I choose!"

"Heavens!" exclaimed Ingraham, sinking back in his chair and covering his face with his hands; "and I did not know this, and have put myself in the attitude of having returned to her at the same moment with her fortune! What a mean scoundrel she must think me!"

"Oh, never despair, *nephew!*" said Mrs. Valentine, spitefully; "there are plenty of rich young ladies who won't object, I dare say, to—to—take you off my hands! Ha! ha! A capital joke! Why don't you go and make love to poor little Sarah Henderson, whose father has hung himself to the bed-post, and left his little daughter without a penny?—There's a chance for your philanthropy. Good morning, Mr. Ingraham!" And, with a look of hatred and revenge, she left the room.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WOMEN, CATS, AND PUPPIES.

WE must now take a glance at the position of the family of the Hendersons. At first, astounded and dismayed at the exposure of the crimes of its head, its members and friends had been completely stunned by the subsequent loss of fortune, and suicide of the criminal.

But the Hendersons had greater pretensions than the upstart aristocracy who surrounded and toadied them. Their virtue was pride. They possessed, in their history and antecedents, something like the *prestige* of birth and blood. The family, which was amongst the first colonists and companions of William Penn, had always occupied a commanding position, both in wealth and influence. They were, too, much more austere and precise, in morals and manners, than is exacted by good society. They affected a pious horror at the levity, the extravagance, the immoralities, of the fashionable world, and looked down upon them with a severe pity. The blow that struck them from their pedestal, and revealed the pitiless and stern

quaker patriarch, Ira Henderson, as a swindler, a debauchee, and a suicide, was a terrible one, and swept the whole family before it. There was not one of their associates who had not, at some time, been the victim of their haughty pride and insolence, and now rejoiced in their fall. They had no sympathy in their sufferings to expect from any one.

But pride is, at least, its own supporter, and knows how, even in falling, to disappoint and punish those it hates. Mrs. Henderson did not complain—sought no consolation—did not even seclude herself, as if disabled by the blow she had received. She had gone through the trying scenes and humiliations incident to the bankruptcy and suicide of her husband without flinching. She was still the superior of those who were dying for a chance to sneer at or condemn her.

Immediately upon the promulgation of the suicide, Miss Jenkins had hastened to her relative, to offer her condolences, as a member of the afflicted family—and to ask her aunt's advice as to the style of mourning-dress that would best become her face and figure.

"My dear aunt," she exclaimed, rushing up to Mrs. Henderson with an effusion of grief and sympathy; "how horrible it all is! and how dreadfully you must have suffered!"

"I do not understand you, Jemima," said Mrs. Henderson, drawing herself up with dignity, and pointing to a chair. "I have done nothing—nothing has happened to me—I do not suffer!"

"Then it isn't true!" exclaimed Mrs. Jenkins, with

an expression ruefully compounded of relief and disappointment; "then the bankruptcy, the suicide, is all"——

"Jemima!" interrupted Mrs. Henderson, in her most severe and stately manner; "since you have called, I shall make you acquainted with the disagreeable events that have occurred. Mr. Henderson, driven into a fever by the accusations and conspiracy of Miss Wilmar and others against his life and property,—aggravated by the elopement of his cashier with a large amount of funds, and the closing of his store,—in a fit of delirium committed suicide. This is the whole. It is a severe dispensation of providence, to which I hope my daughter and myself know how to submit with becoming humility. At all events, we seek no human sympathy."

"Humph!" muttered the disappointed gossip to herself, as she flung herself out of the room; "as proud and obstinate an old fool as ever! I'll go and find Sarah—she, I'm sure, must be more tractable."

Sarah was sitting in her little bed-room, disconsolate and weeping. Her swollen eyelids and the wavering glance of the eyes showed that she had been for a long time without sleep. Her dress was in disorder, and her hair hung loosely over her neck and shoulders. She looked up as Jemima came in.

"Oh, cousin Jemima!" said she, running and throwing herself into her arms; "welcome! welcome! You do not know how miserable I am!"

"Yes, yes, my love, it is very dreadful, no doubt,

and I came immediately to mingle my tears with yours. Our young and bereaved hearts are sadly in need of consolation. Suicide—how horrible! how interesting!”

“It is not that,” said Sarah, with a deep flush; “though my father’s terrible death is enough to appal any one. But I have a sorrow that makes even that forgotten. Oh, cousin, I must tell you or my poor heart will break.”

“Yes, yes, what is it, my love?” exclaimed the gossip, sitting down and arranging herself for a confidential interview. “Come now, tell me all about it; you know you can confide in your Jemima!”

“There is nothing to tell, after all,” said the poor girl, trying to suppress her tears; “but I *did* love him, cousin! and now he is going to marry that Madame de Saintlieu! How ungrateful! He *knew* I loved him!”

“Oh, is that it? Yes, that would have been a fine match, now that you have lost your fortune, and Wilmar has got his—it would have kept it all in the family! But courage, child! There are as good fish in the sea as ever was caught.”

“Oh, it is all over with me—I shall never love again! I wish I was dead!”

“Nonsense!” said the kind-hearted Jemima, soothingly, and drawing the poor girl’s head upon her bosom. “There! take courage! You will forget all this in a little while, and be as happy as ever. Why, I have had my heart broken at least half-a dozen

times—and yet I am not a grain the worse of it! Do you see the least sign of a wrinkle in my forehead? No!—Well, there isn't one in my heart. No, never shall the rosy god plough one in either. Love, my dear, is a disease to which young ladies are subject—like the hooping-cough and the scarlet fever. One must have it—the only difference is, that one is liable to have it more than once—heigho!”

“Oh, but cousin, you have never loved as I loved Arthur—I mean, Mr. Wilmar!” said Sarah, blushing and hiding her face on Jemima's bosom, whose stiff-starched ruffles scratched her face terribly.

“That's what every one thinks, pet—just what I used to think myself. But would you like to be cured of this love for Mr. Wilmar?”

“Not—till—he is—married!” sobbed poor Sarah. “I shall never be cured of it, cousin—never!”

“That means, not for two whole months!” replied Jemima, laughing. “I know all about it; six weeks is the regular period for the disease to run its course. But come, dry your eyes, and let us talk sensibly.—I saw Mrs. Valentine yesterday—such sweet mourning as she has got for her dear dead husband! And she told me a great secret, which I am going to tell you—all in strict confidence, you know! It seems that her nephew, Edward Ingraham, is dying for love of a disdainful little beauty named Sarah, who has heretofore refused to give him the least encouragement. Now I have promised to see this perverse beauty, and

talk the matter over with her. Don't you think, now, seriously, that Mr. Ingraham is very handsome?"

"How can you talk so, cousin! What is Mr. Ingraham to me? Was he not engaged to Helen Wilmar, and did he not give her up because she lost her fortune? And then that poor girl that killed herself! How shocking!"

And yet, even at this very moment, in the depth of her despair, the idea that she was beloved by another, flattered the vanity and soothed the sorrow of the weak-minded girl. Oh, invaluable panacea of disappointed affection! thou tincture of arnica for bruised hearts! thou magical pain extractor of unrequited love—Substitution! What miracles of cures dost thou not effect! The maternal hen, clucking disconsolately for her chickens, ruthlessly ravished from under her protecting wing, to serve the exigencies of the family pot-pie, accepts with resignation a family of orphaned ducklings, and even tries to learn to swim, in order to follow her adventurous family across the farm-yard pond! The sheep stills her bleating for her lost young, if another hungry and frisky youngster of the flock, supplies his place. The watchful cat, stealing from the brook-bank, where she has seen all her little ones sink to rise no more, will console her bereaved affections with the first puppy placed under her charge. They say that women in general resemble cats. We know not how that is—but it is indubitable that many a one has consented to console herself, like the cat, for a broken heart and rifled affections, with—a puppy!

It is only certain high and exquisite souls, that exhale an atmosphere from themselves, out of which they never depart, who love but once and forever. Were it not so, the world, in a couple of generations, would be either broken-hearted or depopulated!

Whatever was the motive that had induced Mrs. Valentine to engage Jemima in the task of bringing Ingraham and Sarah together, she was at least an adroit mediator, and very likely to succeed in her work. The negotiation could not have been in abler hands. Match-making was Jemima's weakness! She was born to marry every body—but herself!

CHAPTER XXXV.

GENOVA—"LA SUPERBA."

THERE are many people who can never judge of any thing but by comparison. If they read a speech, they say, "it is a capital speech—almost as good as Mr. So-and-so's." If they listen to a new prima donna, they are willing to admit, perhaps, that she sings very well, but is not equal to Jenny Lind. This is especially the sort of judgment to which such people resort in their appreciation of natural scenery, or of the beauties of any other country than their own. How common it is to hear foreigners say, "Oh, New York Bay is certainly a very pretty piece of water—but then it cannot be compared to the Bay of Naples!" or listen to some cockney adventurer, who affects to look with a kind of patronizing disdain upon the grim Palisades, or the exquisite beauty of the Highlands, compassionately observing to his friend, "How sublime is the Rhine at Drachenfels!" This stupid kind of half appreciation, on the part of foreigners, of course inspires the natives with a sentiment of national *amour propre*, equally absurd. It would be difficult to make a New Yorker admit—or, in fact, believe—that there

was any place in the world to compare with his beloved and certainly beautiful bay—and when discussing the romantic beauties of the Hudson, he actually works himself up to the belief that every bold headland *is* crowned with the ruins of a feudal castle, more picturesque and more extensive than any of the boasted adornments of the Rhine. We once came very near witnessing a fight, on a North River steamboat, between a New Yorker and a European, because the latter contended that Fonthill was not, in his opinion, *quite* equal to the castle of Ehrenbreitstein! In fact, the abstract sense of beauty, in the million, is a very weak and unsatisfactory endowment—it is all a matter of party, faction, clique, or national feeling.

But there are on earth a few spots of such regal and overwhelming magnificence, that ignorance becomes electrified, and cavil itself dumb, in their presence. Of these, perhaps the two most prominent are, Niagara Falls, and the harbour and city of Genoa.—Every body knows all about the former; but of the latter it is difficult for mere pen and ink to convey even a suggestion of its beauty and magnificence.

Genoa—“*la Superba*,” as it has been named by the common consent of the Italians and the world—rises in a steep amphitheatre, abruptly from the broad blue waters of the Mediterranean. It is built upon a series of picturesque and rocky bluffs, fashioned by art into flowery terraces, sweeping grandly one above another, each bordered with a continuous line of palaces, with their façades of white marble columns,

festooned with vines and flowers—the whole forming a picture realizing the brightest dreams of the imagination, when revelling amid its reveries of the beautiful. The sparkling white of the tall and graceful marble colonnades, half curtained by the tender green of the vines and flowers that creep from column to column—the misty outlines of the mountains beyond, mingling indistinguishably with the palpitating blue of the clear sky—the deep violet of the sea, spread out like the carpet of a throne at its feet—create for the dullest eye, what is so rare to be seen in nature—a perfect picture. In other scenes, the eye and skill of the artist are necessary, to collect and arrange the favourable materials, and reject such as are repulsive or indifferent until, all nicely combined, the conception of the artist, rather than the mere transcript of the place, rises before us. But it is not so with Genoa: a *bona fide* daguerreotype, presenting it exactly as it is, would be its fairest and most favourable delineation.—One would think that the gods, banished from the Acropolis and from the temples of the Peloponessus, and wandering along the shores of their beloved sea, had at length found a spot worthy of their new home—had established there the new city of their temples and their worship—and named it Genoa.

Towards the close of a bright and lovely day—a day worthy of lighting up with its golden atmosphere such a city as Genoa, and which seemed reluctant to leave it—Arthur Wilmar and his wife wandered on one of the flowery terraces overlooking the sea. It had been

the dream of his youth, and his artist life, to visit Europe—for, like all men of genius, he felt sad at the thought of leaving the world without beholding all that the family of genius, whose child he was, had left behind them. It is the thought of a loyal and devoted descendant, to view the trophies and mementoes of his ancestry—a thought that stirs ever in the heart of the true artist, and which taking him from the present, withdraws him to the glorious past, whilst ambition points to him the still more magnificent future. And when at length fortune had blessed him at once with the return of wealth and the possession of Felice, it was he who had asked of her to conduct him to the shrines of the old world, where he had so often dreamed of paying the worship of his soul. Feeling that it was from her that he had received his only correct ideas of art and the beautiful, he begged that she would assume the entire direction of their pilgrimage, while he would resign himself wholly to admiration and love. Felice, with the sweetness of his guardian angel, and the pride of affection, had gladly undertaken to guide her artist lover through the scenes and monuments of ancient art, and finally to introduce him to all that was desirable and charming in European society. Furnished with letters private and official, which opened their way to London, Paris, and the continent, Felice had drawn up her plan with the skill and forethought of a general.

She decided not to take him at first to Paris, where the life, the sparkle, the animation, of the capital of

the world, might communicate its irresistible contagion to his ardent nature, and make his sensibilities less keen for the silent beauties of Italy, that world without a present, and which lies dreaming and basking in the mysterious light of the past. She also avoided London, with its oppressive vastness and bewildering greatness, which paralyzes the mind, and withdraws it, with its gigantic practicality, insensibly from the contemplation and the enjoyment of the ideal. They had, therefore, landed at Liverpool and passed immediately to Marseilles, and thence to Genoa, where they had established themselves in a palace, worthy of the Doria, from whose lofty colonnades they looked down upon the sea, and felt their hearts overflowing with love, expand beneath the delicious influences of the sky and the scene, until they formed a part of the glorious whole. The rapturous, child-like delight with which Arthur drank in the air, and inhaled into his very soul the beauties by which they were surrounded, communicated a new delight to Felice, and with an exquisite pleasure she watched him, as his eyes sparkled and his cheeks glowed with all the joy he felt.

"Well, dearest," said she, as they paused in their walk, and leaned over the marble balustrade, gazing out over the city below them, and the sea, with its noiseless and magic panorama of sails and streamers fluttering and gliding over its surface; "are you contented? This is the gate of Italy—we have entered within the enchanted land. Are you satisfied?"

"Oh my Felice!" exclaimed the young artist, passionately; "how beautiful has all this world become! My heart is too full of happiness! I have but just awakened to life—all that has gone before is but as the memory of a dream. Yes, yes—I am satisfied! God, I thank thee," he continued, taking his wife's hand and pressing it with both his own to his breast, while his eyes were turned towards the blue sky; "I thank thee for giving me this angel of love and beauty, and for endowing me with the capacity to enjoy so much!"

"Ah, flatterer! you cannot spoil me! Yet it is very sweet to be loved so much!"

"See!" said Arthur, slowly withdrawing his gaze from the face of his wife, and looking out over the bay; "there is a ship coming in under the stars and stripes. What a noble vessel she is! and how gallantly she moves, queen-like, amid the bowing courtier waves! I declare I never came so near feeling patriotic in my life! I have an insane desire to hurl my cap over the balcony, and shout 'hurra for Uncle Sam!'"

"Baby!" said Felice, smiling at his enthusiasm; "do if you like! The Genoese are almost as fond of liberty as your Americans themselves—and they adore your countrymen. Indeed, I have to keep close watch over my boy, for fear they should steal him away from me, and make him a President, or some such horrid thing, by main force!"

"No—I am no republican any more—I am in favour

of an absolute monarch—with only one subject ” said Arthur, playfully, drawing Felice towards him.

“ And which are you, the tyrant or the subject? Ah, sec!” she suddenly exclaimed, clapping her hands; “ there is a little wreath of smoke—and listen here comes the booming of the cannon. It is a war vessel, and she is firing a salute. There goes the reply!”

“ Oh, that is capital!” exclaimed Arthur; “ we shall have some gay times here. I will ride down and welcome my countrymen, and invite the officers to come and see us. We must have a fête—I am dying to witness an Italian festa: and what would be so grand as having it *al fresco*, on the deck of one of Yankee Doodle’s rebels? Run, Felice, and hunt up all your cards and letters of introduction, while I ride down to the harbour, and make my observations. I will be back immediately. This is indeed a most agreeable event! We will have rare times! Kiss me, *bell’ alma!*” and away ran the happy Arthur, while Felice stood gazing after him with an expression of intense and ineffable affection.—“ Felice, Felice!” she murmured to herself; “ of what a precious heart have you become possessed! How blessed it is to be able to confer so much happiness!”

When, as the evening was just setting in, Arthur returned home, he entered his wife’s sitting-room with a slow step, and with an expression of countenance altogether unusual to him. Felice, hearing his step, looked up, and ran to meet him.

“Arthur!” she exclaimed, catching his hand and looking into his face anxiously; “what is the matter? What has happened? Are you ill?”

“Felice!” said her husband, taking her hand and speaking in a low whisper; “pity me! I am about to ask you a question that may make you despise me? And yet I must ask it, or I shall die! Promise to forgive me!”

“Pity you! forgive you! My husband—my beloved—what is it? Speak!”

“Felice, did you know when we left home, that the Sea-Hawk had sailed for Genoa?”

“The Sea-Hawk! What is that? I never heard the name before. Is it the ship that came in to-day?”

“Yes—it is Captain Wallingford’s ship—I have invited him and his wife to visit us. They will be here this evening,” said Wilmar, with forced calmness, as if he were pressing the life-blood about to burst forth, back into his heart.

Felice did not speak for a moment. She gazed at her husband with a strange expression, and then burst into hysterical laughter, while she ran to one of the windows opening upon the balcony, as if she would throw herself out. Arthur followed, dismayed and trembling.

“Felice!” cried he, catching her in his arms; “what have I done? Speak to me! forgive me!” and he knelt before her, holding her cold hands in his, and looking up into her face. Her eyes were fixed,

her brow was rigid, but her lips trembled convulsively. Thus they remained for several minutes—an age of torture to Wilmar, through whose breast rushed a torrent of conflicting emotions—love, remorse, terror, despair.

“She loved him, then!” at length he whispered, sinking at her feet with a groan. “She loved him, and sacrificed herself for me! Oh G——!—how can I bear this terrible revelation! Pity! Pity!”

Felice, when her husband let go her hands, raised them to her forehead, and pressing them tightly against her temples, seemed to be struggling to regain possession of herself. Slowly, the light returned to her eyes, and her features relaxed from their fearful tension. Without looking down she put out one of her hands, feeling with her fingers for Arthur’s head, which was still bowed to her feet, while he was sobbing as if his heart would break. At last, an expression of divine serenity passed over her face.

“Arthur,” she said, stooping down and raising him to her heart; “my beloved—what ails thee! Dost thou think Felice is false in her heart to her husband? Be thyself! I have never loved man as I loved thee, oh my beloved—my husband!—Never! never?”

Tenderly, as one leads a wayward child, she led him into her chamber; and opening a little ebony cabinet, she took out a letter and gave it to him. “Read,” said she, “read, my Arthur, and know wholly and entirely the heart of thy Felice!”

It was a copy of her letter to Wallingford.

But Arthur had now regained command of himself.

"Oh, Felice," he murmured; "do not hate me! do not despise me! I love you so much—and I am so unworthy!"

"Read," said she, smiling gravely, and pointing to the letter.

"Do not compel me to disgrace myself in my own esteem forever—oh, do not punish me so severely! I did not suspect—I knew not—oh, I was mad!—Pity! pity!"

"Nay, dear Arthur, I wish to unveil all my heart to you. Keep the letter, and read it at another time for *my* sake. And now lay your head, you naughty boy, on my heart, and hear if there is a throb there that is not your own.—Arthur!" she continued passionately, suddenly throwing her arms about his neck, and pressing him to her bosom; "I love you with all my heart and soul! Oh, never doubt me again—it would kill me! There, and there! Thus I kiss away the first cloud from my husband's brow. Henceforth, let all be peace!"

"Felice! Felice! I am unworthy of you!" repeated her husband, as he convulsively returned her embrace—"but I cannot live without you!"

"You shall not try, dearest!" she replied, in her old tone of affectionate playfulness; "I will not let you try! And now, let our friends come—shall it not be so? There is not a single flutter of doubt in your heart, dearest Arthur? I have shown you mine, to its

very depths of love and tenderness. Be you also frank with me. If it will give you the slightest shadow of disquiet for me to see Captain Wallingford, revoke your invitation.—There is yet time.”

“Dearest Felice, let him come. You now know all my weakness, and have forgiven me. Is it not so?”

“I know nothing but my Arthur’s love. Henceforth we are, more than ever, the whole world to each other. Come, dearest, let us go in!”

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HUSBANDS AND HAPPINESS.

WITH a characteristic delicacy, Captain Wallingford did not accompany his wife in the evening to the Wilmars, but sent her in charge of his lieutenant, Mr. Hallam, ~~an~~ extremely amiable gentleman, who belonged to one of the "first families" of Virginia, and although not yet thirty, had attained, through that species of political influence which is as well understood in Washington as at London, to a first lieutenantship, whilst many older and better men were still plodding on as middies. He was very good looking, his "togger" of the finest and most exquisite material and fashion, and he was altogether considerable of a dandy. He was a great favourite with Mrs. Wallingford, who alternately teased and encouraged the simple youth, to the infinite amusement of her husband—who, incapable of jealousy or any other gloomy and uncomfortable sentiment, highly enjoyed his wife's perpetual flow of spirits, and had actually, during the voyage, fallen in love with her all over again, and given himself to all the fascinations of a

new honey-moon. He had been as frank as Felice—had candidly told his wife how much he had admired and still did admire her brilliant friend, and ended by putting into her hands Felice's letter, which had been the immediate cause of their reconciliation. His wife, penetrated by this noble evidence of confidence and affection, had clasped him enthusiastically to her heart, and murmured anew those vows of love and devotion which it is so delicious to hear, and so dangerous to listen to from any other lips than those of one's own wife. Henceforth, all misunderstandings between Wallingford and his wife were out of the question—they had tested and measured each other's nature, and now reposed, for life and death, serenely in mutual confidence and love. In short they had never been so completely happy. They often talked unreservedly of Wilmar and Madame de Saintlieu; and Wallingford related, with a smile, but with an expression of regret, the uneasiness he saw he had occasioned Arthur, when they had met at the house of Mrs. Attarby.

"Now you are quite sure, my dear monster," murmured Ella, with a pretty pout, as they leaned over the taffrail, and watched the foamy ripple of the waves; "you are *quite* sure that you don't love that dangerous creature any more—not the least little bit?"

"On the contrary," replied her husband, with a smile, drawing his wife tenderly to him, and putting his arm round her slender waist; "on the contrary, I do love her very much! Nay, don't start, and struggle to get away! I have you fast once more, and mean

to keep you safe enough! But she is, you must admit, a noble creature, and you surely have the same cause for loving her as myself—for has she not, my sweet wife, re-united us forever?"

"Yes, yes, you are quite right!" whispered Ella, clinging closer to her husband's side; "and I am a foolish and wayward child! But I will be so no more! There! You shall see! I am certain that Wilmar and his bride will come to Italy as soon as they are married; and I do hope that we shall meet them. You shall see," she continued, with a sudden burst of enthusiasm, "how completely I am cured of my jealousy and coquetry, and how worthy I will be of your noble love."

"What! and won't you positively flirt any more—not even with Mr. Hallam? He'll certainly jump overboard, some fine night, if you doom him entirely to despair!"

"Oh!" said Ella, laughing, "you really must leave me my handsome lieutenant—I could not think of spoiling his exquisite uniform, and dissolving that *comme il faut* shirt-bosom, by driving him to despair and a bath in the salt sea wave!"

"Well, well! I shall keep a sharp watch—and if he misbehaves himself, I can always, as his superior officer, ornament his delicate wrists with a pair of iron ruffles, or send him to the main-top! But come, dearest," said he, changing his light and gay tone to one of tender solicitude, "let us go in. The evening breeze begins to gather across the distant sea."

"When shall we be at Genoa?" she inquired, as he led her away to the cabin.

"To-morrow, if this breeze does not fail us. So jump!—don't be afraid!—I'll catch you!"

Ella balanced herself for a moment, like a bird, on the threshold of the gang-way, down which her husband had already descended, and then, with a little cry, threw herself into his outstretched arms.

The next day the Sea-Hawk made the harbour of Genoa, and came to anchor in deep water, close under the town—having exchanged the customary signals, and received the usual official visits of ceremony.

Scarcely was the noble vessel comfortably moored, before a boat from shore came alongside, and Captain Wallingford received the card of Mr. Wilmar, which was sent up over the side. Hastening to his wife's state-room, he opened the door, and with a glow of pleasure on his face, held out the card, exclaiming,

"Now, dearest Ella, we really are in luck! Here are Wilmar and his wife at Genoa, and the noble fellow has already come to visit us. By Jove, I begin to love him, too! Now every thing is as it should be, and the last trace of cloud is dissipated from all our hearts. Is it not so?"

• Yes, yes!—how delightful!"

"Now I will just go over the side, and thank Wilmar for his prompt kindness—I'll be back in a moment."

The meeting between Wallingford and Wilmar, in the boat, was of course apparently cordial and unem-

barrassed. Wilmar invited the Captain to consider their house as his own during his stay in port, and said that, had they been aware of the name of the vessel and its commander, Mrs. Wilmar would undoubtedly have charged him with a special message to his wife. As it was, he begged that all ceremony might be dispensed with, and that they should have the pleasure of seeing them that very evening.

"Most sincerely do I thank you for your prompt civility to a countryman," replied Wallingford; "and although you meet acquaintances where you only expected strangers, I cheerfully accept your invitation."

"I would make it so much the more cordial on that account," said Wilmar. "Pray make my excuses to Mrs. Wallingford, for not paying my respects to her in person. I am a terrible landsman, and was just wondering in a sort of despair, how I should ever surmount the walls of your floating fort."

The two gentleman separated, and Arthur returned with a smile on his face, but a pang at his heart, and went slowly homewards. It was true that Felice had told him every thing relating to her acquaintance with Wallingford, and had related the particulars of his having been reconciled to his wife, and her sailing with him for a foreign port. But she had not mentioned the name of his ship, (for she really did not know it;) and when, on inquiry, he ascertained that it was the *Sea-Hawk*, Captain Wallingford, he was about to visit, he had a hard struggle to preserve his

serenity and perform with dignity his self-imposed offices of hospitality.

But his subsequent interview with Felice, whose divine sincerity and truth had completely reassured him, and made him ashamed of his momentary return of an unworthy jealousy, had given an entirely new direction to his feelings; and he awaited with impatience the arrival of his guests, that he might convince his wife how completely the fiend was exorcised from his bosom.

It was, therefore, with real disappointment that after welcoming Mrs. Wallingford, he listened to the excuses which her husband had sent, on the ground of his duties on ship-board, which would detain him from paying his respects until the following day. Whispering to Felice, he bowed to Mrs. Wallingford and the flourishing Mr. Hallam, and going out, at once returned to the *Sea-Hawk*, where he surprised Captain Wallingford, seated alone in his cabin.

"My dear captain," said he, in a frank joyous tone, advancing and holding out his hand; "you see it is of no use to try and escape our hospitality. I have actually scaled the fortress, and taken the commander prisoner. There is no use to resist—you must yield yourself, rescue or no rescue. Felice and Mrs. Wallingford are impatiently expecting you, and your apartments in the *Terrace Doria* are ready for you. The *Sea-Hawk* will be quite safe under the gallant Mr. Hallam, and my vetturino shall bring him down after supper. So, come along, and let us at once commence

an intimacy which, if you find me worthy of it, I mean shall ripen into a friendship that can never change."

An appeal like this to such a nature as Wallingford's was irresistible. He rose and gave his hand frankly to Wilmar.

"My dear Mr. Wilmar," said he, "I am yours, *con tutto il core*, as our Italian friends so charmingly express it. Lead on—I follow—do with me whatever you like. From this moment, let us be friends and brothers, for life and death. Do you accept?"

"Yes, yes—that is just what I mean—*con tutto il core!*" exclaimed the young man, grasping firmly the hand held out to him.

In a few minutes, the vetturino of Wilmar was rattling noisily up the *strada Nuova*; and to the evident chagrin of the just-now complacent Mr. Hallam, Wilmar and his friend burst joyously into the drawing-room.

"Victoria!" exclaimed Arthur, in a tone of excitement; "Felice—Mrs. Wallingford—behold my prisoner! Be it your care to wreath his chains with flowers!"

"Yes, but he must be closely watched, Mr. Wilmar!" said Ella, mischievously glancing at Felice.

"Oh, I am on parole!" exclaimed Wallingford, laughing; "and besides, he would be an ungrateful prisoner, indeed, who could entertain a wish to escape from such sweet captivity!" and seating himself on a sofa, he drew his wife towards him, and gallantly kissed her forehead.

The only dissatisfied face in the room was that of Lieutenant Hallam.

“Courage, mon brave!” said his commander, touching him on the shoulder; “we will have a grand *fête* on board the Sea-Hawk, and you shall make up a bouquet of beauties from the fairest flowers of Italy.”

CHAPTER XXXVII.

FRUITION.

A FEW days after the arrival of the Sea-Hawk, Mrs. Wilmar received a letter from Mrs. Attarby, which had followed her from Liverpool. It was full of expressions of interest, and of good wishes for herself and her husband. Among other items of news, the writer stated that the marriage of Mr. Edward Ingraham and Sarah Henderson was now an understood thing. Mrs. Henderson had at first violently opposed this match; but she seemed to be very much broken in spirit, by all that she had recently suffered, and had finally given her consent. The Henderson mansion was closed, and Mrs. Henderson and her daughter had removed to a modest house in a distant quarter of the city, where they passed the days of their mourning in complete seclusion.

Mrs. Valentine had resumed her receptions and *conversaziones*, and appeared more boisterously gay and reckless than ever. Mr. Ingraham had openly quarrelled with his aunt, and had gone to live at a hotel. He seemed to be greatly changed, and was scarcely ever seen abroad.

Miss Jemima Jenkins, disconsolate and forlorn, had at length fairly billeted herself upon Mrs. Attarby, and was now her constant companion. She found her not at all a disagreeable person, and at times very useful. As to herself, she had no idea that her divorce case would be brought on under a year or two, at soonest; and she suggested that she might, meantime, be expected in Italy, and begged that her friend would keep her informed of their movements, in order that she might join them, and, as she expressed it, "once more have a little rational society, and escape from the memory of all the snobbish annoyances by which she was surrounded."

Meanwhile, the days and hours flew rapidly by with the friends at Genoa, whose happiness was as unclouded as the brilliant sky above them, and whose sweetest affections expanded and bloomed in vigorous growth, like the rare flowers that every where blushed and shed their fragrance around their footsteps. Love, tried in the furnace of adversity, disappointment, and self-denial, now planted deep in the kindly soil of noble hearts, sprung up in a bounteous harvest of confidence, mutual devotion, and a happiness as serene as the golden air that lay upon the palaces and gardens of "Genova, la Superba," and as unfathomable as the blue sea that murmured its mysterious music at their feet.

THE END.

JULIA TREMAINE,

A Tale of High Life.

ONE OF THE MOST ELEGANT, REFINED AND FASCINATING
TALES EVER PUBLISHED IN AMERICA.

Second Edition. Ready June 20th, 1855.

In one splendid 12mo. vol., bound in Ultra-Marine and Scarlet Cloth.

RETAIL, \$1 25.

 *Read the comments of the Press.*

"JULIA TREMAINE—We have received from the publishers, Messrs. Whilt & Yost, 309 Market street, a few proof sheets of "Julia Tremaine" a novel of English society, which they will issue in a few days—From a hasty glance at the pages, we incline to the belief, it will create a sensation in literary circles; it is written with the skill of an evidently practised hand, and seems to be absorbingly interesting—The *ladies* will be particularly delighted with it."—*Fitzgerald's City Item.*

JULIA TREMAINE—OR, THE FATHER'S WISH AND HUSBAND'S DUTY—PHILADELPHIA: WHILT & YOST.

"Our Republican aristocrats, who rejoice in titles, are advised to procure this book, which is built on the tip-top heights of fashionable English society—there being not a man below a baronet, nor a woman below an "Honourable."

"Such a brilliant procession of lords and ladies, have never before been introduced to American society."—*Cummings' Evening Bulletin.*

JULIA TREMAINE—OR, THE FATHER'S WISH AND HUSBAND'S DUTY—PUBLISHED BY WHILT & YOST, 309 MARKET ST.

This book is a publication of a new and enterprising firm. The scene is laid in England. The plot involves the hopes, fears, and sufferings of every day social life. The career of the heroine, Julia, is sketched with power, and the interest is exceedingly well sustained throughout. To the lovers of fiction, this prettily printed volume, will furnish an agreeable and interesting repast. The incidents are well sketched, and the narrative is easy and flowing." *Sunday Despatch.*

The publishers could append many more favourable notices of "Julia Tremaine"—but consider it unnecessary.

 *Read the Preface to Julia Tremaine.*

Send for a copy—every body will be delighted with it.

Sent, free of postage, to the purchaser, on remitting, through mail, \$ 1 25.

Preface to Julia Tremaine.

THE publishers in presenting the following tale to an American public, feel no hesitation in pronouncing it one of the most interesting, refined, and beautiful stories yet offered for their perusal.

The style is pure and simple, abounding in deep and thrilling interest from the first to the last page.

In every day life we have frequently observed parallel cases to those drawn in Julia Tremaine. The deserted wife with her helpless babe, forsaken and forgotten by her unworthy spouse, with tears will answer how near her case approaches to the sorrowful Julia.

The profligate and extravagant, disregarding all the better feelings of humanity, lured on by ambition to the attainment of unhallowed ends, will answer how near the picture drawn by Lady Maria approaches her case.

This is no overdrawn exaggerated tale of human life. That there does exist in society, these forsaken wives, and unprincipled women, festering the good intentions of honest persons, is beyond all doubt.

This then will hold up to them a mirror, in which they may see a "counterfeit presentment" of themselves, the sequel proving that virtue and honesty of purpose must and will triumph over all the fiendish intrigues and plots that can be concocted to achieve its overthrow.

WHILT & YOST.

Philada. June 1st, 1855.

WHILT & YOST, BOOK-BINDERS,

309 Market Street,

ABOVE EIGHTH, NORTH SIDE,

Are now ready to contract with Publishers and Booksellers generally for the binding of

Printed Books,

IN ALL THEIR ENDLESS VARIETY.

Having added to their establishment all the new and improved machinery of the day, and brought into requisition the services of the best workmen, they feel every assurance that they will be able to give complete satisfaction to all who may favour the house with their patronage.

Complete arrangements have been made to supply the wants of

BOOKSELLERS AND PUBLISHERS

Not having binderies of their own.

By the aid of a great deal of Machinery, we are enabled to guaranty to Publishers

**Fifteen per cent. less in the cost of their Binding
than formerly paid.**

N. B.—In reply to the many calls W. & Y. have had for the Binding of Magazines, Periodicals, and single volumes, they would state that they have fitted up one part of their Establishment expressly for work of this description.

WHILT & YOST,

BOOK-BINDERS.





UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

30m-7,'70(N847588)—C-120

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 001 372 133 7

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
THIS BOOK CARD



University Research Library

PS 991 H1092

CALL NUMBER

SER

VOL

P



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26
IRM J95993

